The
COMMONWEAL
A Weekly Review of Literature the Arts and Public Affairs
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Week by Week

IF THE statements and activities of Secretary Cordell Hull were the only criterion, American foreign policy could be characterized primarily as an effort to bolster up international trade and international law and to work for peace by strictly peaceful means. But other acts and purposes of the administration becloud the picture. Secretary Harold Ickes's unfortunate Nazi-baiting speech in Cleveland last month, in substance upheld by Undersecretary Sumner Welles and Senator Key Pittman's unfriendly addendum, are symptoms of increasing aggressiveness. So too the China loan and the firm if polite note to Japan refusing to recognize the "new order" in the Far East. The President's first speech before the new Congress gave warning to the dictators. Although our attitude at Lima was most neighborly, Pan-American solidarity is aimed specifically against the three fascist powers. Apparently we are reverting to balance of power diplomacy. The nation's rush to arms must be viewed against this background. While much of this program may provide legitimate self-defense, such as the new bases called for by the naval committee and certain industrial preparedness, one aspect is distinctly disquieting. When the American flair for the biggest, the latest, the most and the best, becomes a yardstick for our national armament we may well wonder with columnist General Johnson whether the United States is not in actuality threatening Germany and Italy as a protection for England and France, a threat we must be willing to carry out with another expeditionary force. Typical of the new mentality is the proposal of 13,000 fighting planes in two years based on reports of Germany's air force. Right in line is the project of training 20,000 college boys annually to become air pilots, together with the even larger prepardness ambitions of the NYA. The 76th Congress will have a fight on its hands to restrict arms expansion to legitimate defense plans of competent technicians.

Whither Our Foreign Policy

THE RECENT triumph of the Hideyoshists in Japan (those who would conquer China all at once as opposed to the piecemealers) has reinforced the popular demand for an embargo against Japan, some of the proponents of which go further and urge that the embargo be reinforced by a national boycott of Japanese goods. For many months we have had a boycott of German goods based on consumer pressure as much as on the concerted action of Jewish merchants. It is said that the result has been a 21 percent decrease in imports from Germany as well as a disproportionate increase in imports from the European "democracies." For over a year it has been illegal for Americans to ship arms to either side in Spain. What are the implications of all this existing or proposed economic warfare? For it is warfare. No boycott or embargo can be impartially enforced: Catholics and communists agree that our Spanish embargo helps Franco; those working for a Japanese embargo openly assert that its object would be to help China; the boycott against German goods has been to the advantage of England, France, Holland, Norway. Are we to approve such economic warfare? And if so, on what principle should we judge it worthy of approval? Obviously not all embargoes or boycotts are good in themselves; those who want us to lift the Spanish embargo are generally in favor of imposing one on Japan.

Embargoes and Boycotts

ANALYSIS of the whole question seems to resolve itself into two points of approach: the motive

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involved in any given case and the practical results. Motives are, in making moral judgments, of primary importance. If, because of our love of peace, we as a nation decide not to export arms and military supplies to any country under any circumstances, our motive is good and the decision may be applauded, although the practical difficulties involved in its application may make the scheme nugatory. Are cotton and oil military supplies in peace time? or are they just articles of commerce? They can be both. Yet to prohibit their export in peace times would be to make a superhuman sacrifice on our part and to inflict real injustice on our neighbors. A boycott of all products made under conditions below some reasonable labor standard has more moral justification than a boycott merely directed against a country which some group of Americans happens to dislike. When the motive is good, then, we may safely say that to that extent an embargo or boycott is licit, but motives are not the only consideration. Such economic measures have a way of producing unexpected results. We boycott Nazi products and confirm Nazi propaganda to the effect that we hate Germans. We boycott Japanese silk and throw American workers out of jobs. We once declared an embargo against England and France, injured neither, and nearly succeeded in destroying our own national unity. What is the answer? One's heart often pulls one way and one's head the other—which is generally a sign that a lot more head-work, on the part of all of us, is indicated.

Casting Bread

THE ANNOUNCEMENT just before New Year's that a relief committee has been formed to raise $500,000 for the purpose of sending 500,000 bushels of surplus wheat as food to the women and children of Spain is an encouraging sign that Americans recognize the necessary limitation of partizanship and the need for generosity even in war. There will be incidental effects from this relief upon the contest in Spain and upon our own economy, but however important they may be, they are secondary to the clear demands of charity. Mr. George MacDonald, the eminent Catholic who heads the relief committee, wrote in his letter to the President, "The hardships and privations which the civilian population in Spain is undergoing, particularly the helpless women and children, is a matter of deep concern to all of us regardless of where our sympathies lie. At a time like this we must do our utmost for these innocent victims of a tragic situation." The new year inherits too many tragic situations which demand our utmost efforts and generosity. While this $500,000 is being raised for those within Spain itself, there are still the almost world-wide demands for relief of refugees. Spain furnishes her quota of these, as well as central Europe. The Basque Catholics call attention to their exiled children, some of them in altogether foreign lands, a great number gathered together wretchedly in Barcelona. A special effort is being made to transfer these latter to the Basque country of France, across the border from their home. In southwestern France they would have physical and spiritual security that are obviously tragically lacking in war-torn, disorientated Catalonia. And when we have looked at the tragedies that require our sympathy and work in the western world, we can turn to China where the human problem is presented on an even more cataclysmic scale.

Relief from Relief

ONE OF the most disturbing features of our present relief set-up is the fact that reduction in relief rolls tends to lag so far behind business recovery. The *Survey Midmonthly* cites a boom period from March, 1936, to July, 1937, in New York City as an example. During this interval business activity rose from 13 percent below normal to 8½ percent above normal, employment from 27 percent below normal to 21 percent below normal and relief rolls dropped off less than 1 percent. Various labor economies explain this in part, but during a long period of economic attrition there is also a steady drift of unemployed heads of families from dependence on past savings, relatives and friends, and private organizations, to public relief. Recent WPA reports of the effects of the current business rise are somewhat more encouraging, but the figure for able-bodied unemployed still promises to hover about the 10,000,000 mark. Conceived as a very necessary emergency program, public relief is taking on an increasingly permanent character; there are new plans for civil service status for certain categories. The recent disclosures on WPA political machines in Kentucky, Pennsylvania and Tennessee indicate the temptations involved in the maintenance of this new servile class. WPA work succeeds only half way in preserving ambitions and skills. Absorption of idle labor by a resurgent industry under the present system is as much of a mirage as the prosperity that still hides around the corner. A new means of reintegrating millions of our fellow citizens into the national economic scheme must be found before their morale is permanently impaired.

A Hint from Sheboygan

ABOUT fifty miles north of Milwaukee on Lake Michigan is Sheboygan, Wisconsin, a community of some 40,000 souls. Ever since 1934 the city's relief costs have been mounting steadily, with the sharpest rise registered during the past year. In 1928 $.45 of the local tax rate of $31.38 went for relief; in 1937 some $9.04 of the $37.46 rate went for the pur-

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pose, despite the paring of expenditures to a subsistence minimum. Last summer the mayor convoked city officials and local business leaders to study their increasing difficulties. Before anything else a Sheboygan Community Peace Board—comprising four representatives of labor, four of management, and three of the public—was set up on the model of the Toledo plan for settling labor disputes. A New Industries Council was formed to expedite the marketing and merchandising of Sheboygan toys and furniture and other local products in the East, to plan local industrial expansion and other projects found feasible in other communities and also to establish new industries. WPA was used to obtain data on seasonal unemployment and vocational training possibilities. In the words of the mayor, quoted in *Business Week,* the community is determined to overcome the wasting away of material and human resources. "Facing it as a practical business problem, if we are spending $425,000 a year for relief, and can save a considerable portion of that by even starting our own industries, why shouldn't we do it? Only the creation of more wealth will reduce this burden." It is expected that similar action will be taken in other Wisconsin communities, for community action to produce more has decided possibilities.

Tom Sawyer, Modern Chapter

WE WOULD not be thought to approve of youngsters climbing into mints. We would be clearly understood to reprehend any forms of illegal entry, as defined by the law, especially when such illegal entry is effected by boys in their middle teens. We are fully cognizant of the bad example of such cases, and the fact that they are technically in the category of very grave and troubling social phenomena. But for all of that we cannot but hope that society will be in a merciful mood when it approaches the case of the two San Francisco lads and the United States Mint Building. It so clearly belongs in that amoral but innocent no-man's-land of the adolescent, for which urban society, alas, cannot make much provision; how often, for instance, has it not been remarked that the boys who steal apples in the country end up as respected farmers, whereas the boys who steal apples in the city may end up in juvenile court on the way to reform school! The general Tom Sawyerishness of the San Francisco episode is evident in every line. Two lads were told that the federal building was of impregnable steel, entry-proof, bristling with alarms, electric detectors and guards with gas bombs. Thereupon the impulse to try to get in "just to see if it could be done" was to a couple of fifteen-year-olds wholly irresistible. Their procedure had the simplicity of all classic achievement. As Lindbergh got across the Atlantic by flying east and not stopping till he got to France, even so, Paul and William shinned up a pipe to the second story, entered by a half-opened window, stole past a reading guard, appropriated a copper plate to prove they had been there, got out again, and telephoned the police. The whole venture was boylike and completely inutilitarian. Of course the federal court will have to deal with it, but we trust it may be by the predicted method of paroling the boys under approved conditions for the rest of their minority. Indeed, they have performed (though unintentionally) a service in showing that the mint could be so easily entered. Asked what might be done to make it safer, they replied with complete seriousness: "Well, they might close the window."

Women and Public Office

MRS. ROOSEVELT was less than her usual admirably judicious self, it seems to us, in her recent reported comments on women and politics. Her theme was the report of the League of Women Voters recording a shrinkage in the number of women office-holders in the last ten years: a decrease from 149 in 38 states to 130 in 28 states, and in Congress, from 9 to 5 federal women legislators. These data are certainly not spectacular, and probably not indicative of anything at all beyond the temporary fluctuation which many factors can produce for a limited time in any given field. Yet Mrs. Roosevelt ascribes them to the apathy of women voters. Women are not prone to back their sex at the polls, she finds; when they finally do show a determination to have the women's point of view represented in politics, plenty of capable women candidates will present themselves to be voted for. That there are many more women qualified to serve their country in public office than are found in office at the moment, is of course true; just as it is true of men. But what qualifies these women is not the fact that they represent a feminine viewpoint in politics. The phrase frankly seems quite meaningless. The field for developing the difference in men's and women's points of view—and life is of course immeasurably enriched by that development—is social and domestic life, not public and political life; precisely because the sphere of political life is not the personal one of nuance, taste, emotion, but the impersonal one of principle and law. Again, it may be that women voters (once more, like men voters) in general prize too little the high privilege of voting—although present signs seem to many observers to point to a fine awakening of political responsibility all along the line. But whatever may prove women's apathy at the polls, their failure to support other women *qua* women certainly does not. Such support would be an unwise and dangerous use of the ballot—very little reflection is required to show what precedents

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it would make and what counter-actions it would lead to. That it is not practised by women as a group is a definite tribute to their political common sense.

Letting the Chips Fall

THE RESIGNATIONS of Homer Cummings (68 years old) as Attorney General and Daniel Roper (71 years old) as Secretary of Commerce came as no surprise. There was some question of whom the President would appoint to succeed them. The defeat of Frank Murphy (45 years old) in last fall's election made it almost certain that he would receive a federal appointment of some sort; rumors about Harry Hopkins (48 years old) have been floating around for months. Both of these gentlemen give conservatives the willies and keep good business men from adequate sleep nights. It was a question whether the President would pursue a policy of appeasement by appointing two right wingers or inconsequents to the new Cabinet posts or whether he would name his weapons by appointing two out-and-out New Dealers. He has chosen the latter course and Hopkins and Murphy are his men. It seems to us that the decision was well taken. Whatever one may think of Mr. Hopkins in detail, he is endowed with great vitality and energy; he has the confidence of the rest of the administration; he has a great deal of personal charm. It is quite possible that he may be able to effect an entente cordiale—as much as such a thing is possible—between business and government, which Secretary Roper could not do precisely because he was not enough of a New Dealer and hence had no great influence with his associates.

MR. MURPHY'S case is more complex. To only one episode in his career is serious objection taken—his decision as Governor of Michigan not to allow the execution of the court order which called for the expulsion of the sit-down strikers from the automobile plants in Detroit. In other respects his record is admirable and has never been put into serious question. The attack on him is based upon the idea that a chief magistrate must automatically uphold the law, and in this case the law gave Governor Murphy a mandate to expel the strikers, using force if necessary. Yet in such moments of crisis it is a question whether a chief magistrate has not a higher, longer range, less legalistic duty to perform. It is universally admitted that in wartime the President should so consider his office and should so exercise it, in his discretion, as best to serve the interests of the nation at large, without undue regard to the letter of the law. In the case of industrial war, do we not have a similar case? The sit-down strikers were violating the legal concept of property and their opponents took legal action against them. To permit the immediate enforcement of that action, however, was to run the chance of violating other rights, the right of human life among them. Confronted with such a crisis, is it not the duty of a governor to choose the lesser evil, even if in so doing he contravenes the law? We believe that it is, and the President has made clear that he supports this view of the matter. His decision has shown that he has the courage to stick to his own line. If Americans do not like the line, they will have ample occasion to show their dislike a year from next November.

Cooks and Broth

WHEN one of the most dignified of university presses puts its imprint upon the biography of a French chef, one is tempted to believe that the levity of the times has got the best of academic dignity, or else that the chef was quite a fellow whose life and achievements may be worth looking into.[1] Let me at once assure the reader that the dignity of Cambridge will not be impaired by this latest of its offspring; the chef is, indeed, a man who deserves such immortality as is conferred by a full-dress scholarly biography, complete with appendices and an index. Nor is this to suggest that his biographer has written a dull book, for she has not. "Portrait of a Chef" makes pleasant reading, and the pleasure is not at all impeded by that feeling of confidence in its accuracy and careful research produced by scholarly apparatus.

The subject of this biography is Alexis Soyer (1809-1858), sometime chef to the London Reform Club, and an undoubted benefactor of the human race. For a man who died at forty-nine to have done so much is no trifling accomplishment. It indicates the possession of that vitality which seems to characterize a chosen few of the human race and to distinguish them from the rest of us—whether they use their powers of accomplishment for good or ill. Soyer was born at Meaux-en-Brie, a small town famous for its cheese, at no great distance from Paris. His family was modestly well off and respectably connected. The lad was early sent to the cathedral school at Meaux as a chorister, in the hope that he would have a vocation—a hope very far from being fulfilled, for there is no evidence that Soyer ever had more than a vague religion of liberal humanitarianism. In any case he succeeded in getting himself expelled from school at the age of twelve and went to live with an elder brother in Paris. More by force of circumstance than anything else, the boy became apprenticed to this brother's trade—cookery.

The new trade agreed well with Soyer's native

[1] *Portrait of a Chef, by Helen Morris. Cambridge University Press. New York: The Macmillan Company.* $3.00.

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talents. At sixteen he was already a second chef in a good establishment; a year later he was *premier,* with twelve cooks under him. It was inevitable that so talented a young man should soon find his way to what was then the chef's paradise—England, which was enjoying thoroughly in the persons of the rich and the noble the happier fruits of the industrial revolution. Great salaries were paid to masters of the culinary art—from £300 to £1,000 a year, princely sums in the 'thirities (a plain cook was getting £10 per annum). So in 1831 Alexis went to England and obtained excellent employment in a series of private homes, achieving a considerable reputation. When the Whig leaders in Parliament, flushed with the triumphs which culminated in the Reform Bill, decided to have a club of their own, they asked Soyer to serve as chef and to plan the kitchens for their new club house. Here he remained from 1836 until 1849. And it was while he served the club that he achieved wide public fame for a multiplicity of talents which then first found outlets for their expression. He invented stoves and kitchen utensils; he devised formulae for bottled sauces which enriched the new firm of Crosse and Blackwell and continued in demand for over half a century; he published cook books which sold by the thousand and which taught England's newly rich middle class how to eat.

Then, after Soyer left the Reform, he "freelanced" by managing large banquets, conducting an immense restaurant in connection with the Crystal Palace Exposition (1851), and writing more cook-books. If these things alone had constituted his career, it would be safe to risk a guess that his biography would never have been written. But this was not all, and for two quite other achievements his name should live as one of the minor heroes of history.

The 'forties saw an increased expansion of England's wealth, but they were also, for the commonality of England, the "hungry" 'forties. A complex of economic factors produced an unprecedented disparity between the luxuries of the rich and the sufferings of the poor. Unemployment and starvation were general. The need for soup kitchens was acute, and Soyer, who was all his life a pattern of generosity, began teaching charitable ladies how to make good, nourishing and inexpensive soup. He had a flair for publicity and in a short time his recipe for soup and his plans for a new soup-boiler were the talk of London. Finally he was invited by the government to superintend the building of a model kitchen in Dublin, where the need was perhaps the greatest of all. On April 5, 1847, the new Dublin kitchen was opened and a brilliant gathering of nobility and gentry were given rations of soup. From the 6th of the same month to August 14 over a million portions of superior soup were served to the poor at a cost half that prevalent elsewhere. It is interesting to note that Soyer's formula—as usual he was in advance of his time—called for using the outsides of vegetables, thus improving the product and avoiding waste.

This accomplishment alone is enough to make Soyer notable; his second contribution to society was of even greater use, for it solved a permanent rather than a recurring problem. Those who have read "Mutiny on the Bounty" have an idea of what the food in the Royal Navy was like. That in the army was no better. In wartime both were indescribable. The Crimean war was to arouse English public opinion on this subject as it never had been aroused before (or since). Again Soyer saw an opportunity to be of service. He volunteered to go to Constantinople and the Crimea at his own expense to reform the army's weakest department. His offer was accepted and he set to work. His first task was to design a stove for use in the field. So successful was the result that such stoves, substantially as he had designed them, are still widely in use as standard army equipment. Then he proceeded to the "front" and set to work with true heroism to improve the system of cooking in hospital and camp. It was a task fit for a Hercules—involving revolutionary changes in that most hide-bound of all traditions, the traditions of military service. Soyer gave himself completely to the work. He exposed himself to every hardship. Twice he nearly died of Crimean fever. When the war was over, he looked like an old man, and his health was permanently undermined. But he finished the job, and it is quite possible that he thereby saved more lives than were lost in battle during the whole campaign. When he died, Florence Nightingale, who was his constant associate, wrote: "His death is a great disaster. Others have studied cooking for the purpose of gormandizing, some for show, but none but he for the purpose of cooking large quantities of food in the most nutritious manner for great numbers of men. He has no successor."

It may seem sententious to indicate a very obvious moral to all this. How many of us there are who think and hope and work for a fuller physical life for humanity and who actually accomplish so little. Is it not always well to remember that the intelligent application of the skills we already have can be more fruitful, on occasion, than splendid—and necessary—theorizing? A trained professional, by giving his time and energy, can often save a situation where the rest of us would be mere bunglers. Let such men remember to how great a use they may put their talents in movements of reform. And let those who would effect reforms humbly seek for such as was Alexis Soyer. . . . But here is sententiousness indeed, and it would be effrontery to carry it further. H. L. B.

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Hypothesis and Myth

By JAMES N. VAUGHAN

HYPOTHESIS and myth are terms currently in use to denote respectively structures of thought which are valid and invalid. (Hypothesis has other meanings but I wish here to disregard them.) As the word is used, for example, by Professor Victor F. Lenzen in a recent study ("Procedures of Empirical Science," page 59. University of Chicago Press. $1.00), hypothesis means principles by aid of which scientific facts can be found. In contrast, the term myth is everywhere used to signify a psychic content by means of which facts are so effectively obscured as to be lost. It is evident that to distinguish hypothesis from myth in this fashion is to imply the existence of some common factual world occupied by objects which may or may not gain access to consciousness. It is also implied that substitutes for actual fact can circulate in our minds and govern our conduct. Furthermore the facts of an objective world need not be material in nature. Included among facts are principles themselves. Myths too are facts of a sort. They are called myths only because they pretend to have referents which are not objective facts.

Hypothesis is to intelligence what the microscope or telescope is to the eye. It brings into the realm of "visible" entities objects which, without hypothesis, lie outside the effective range of the senses even when aided by mechanical devices. Thus the alpha particle has never been directly perceived but if such a particle strikes an appropriate screen there arise scintillations which can be directly encountered by the senses. The scintillations are a macrophysical reality which when interpreted in terms of the principles of physics leads to the "observation" of the alpha particle. Or again an electrified particle, itself non-perceptible, when passed through a cloud chamber ionizes the molecules it strikes producing ions on which water vapor condenses. Both the existence of the particle and its tracks are observed not directly but by tracing and interpreting the drops of water. These illustrations drawn from Professor Lenzen's monograph show how certain objective physical realities depend for their psychic existence on principles of interpretation. Here however we are witnessing a kind of partial dependence of things on thought which is not based on the intrinsic natures of the things themselves. If the alpha particle cannot be seen by our eyes it is due to the weakness of the latter and not to the characters or properties of the former.

There is another kind of reality which is of a nature wholly removed from direct sensory experience. Social, historical, cultural, moral, legal or psychological reality (hereafter for brevity termed simply social reality) is of this sort. For its "perception" not only must "hypothesis" be used at some point but it must be employed at every point. It is not to be denied that in the universe of directly perceptible facts there are traces, vestiges or symbols of this kind of reality. But in themselves such facts are relational or psychic and therefore in principle not susceptible of direct discovery by the senses. Consequently they can only be discovered by the aid of hypothesis. This is not to overlook the direct, original abstractive power of human intelligence. This abstractive power enables each individual spontaneously to develop, unassisted by other ideas, the global idea of *ens* (being). But all particularizations of this idea presuppose the factor of hypothesis. If for the term hypothesis substitution were made of *methodological concept* or *directive idea* or *ens rationis* the same notion would be expressed but in terms coined by other authors as different from one another as is Claude Bernard from Saint Thomas Aquinas.

That awareness of social reality is dependent on the existence in the observer of some "determinate unity" (D'Arcy), is the unanimous verdict of all modern scholars. To specify but a few of them chosen at random from various fields, the doctrine in question will be found expressed by Whitehead, Needham, Collingwood, Sullivan, Chevalier, Mach, Rice, Znaniecki and Ortego y Gasset. This doctrine has been the starting point for different and even contradictory philosophical deductions but, withdrawn from such entangling alliance, it stands absolutely intact.

The knowledge of social facts being necessarily mediated by conceptual structures, the latter decide in part what is encountered in society and history. As Rice puts it: "Experience notoriously changes in accordance with the ideational system to which it is related." The reason why Lord Acton's dream of an impartial historiography is still unrealizable consists in the fact that national and other "just prejudices" (Burke) are divergent. So affected by directive ideas is human awareness of social reality, that it is true to state that significant advances in scientific understanding of such reality are directly governed by discovery of new master concepts which serve to bring into focus facts which in the absence of the relevant concepts necessarily remain invisible. Instances of such concepts are provided in Turner's "Frontier," Sumner's "Folkways," and Pareto's "Circu-

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lation of the Elite." Likewise all specimens of the use of the typological method in psychology from the times of the ancient to the present date, from the Greek's conception of sanguine, choleric, melancholy and phlegmatic men to Jung's extrovert and introvert, illustrate the same dependence of fact discoveries on conceptual structures. Granted an illuminating directive idea there follows an understanding in systematic form of immense numbers of separated events. Eliminate the idea and though the events occur or facts exist, they remain outside consciousness enslaving whomsoever they touch since, as mere forces, they press upon and mold life without the human will being in a corresponding position intelligently and responsibly to react to them.

Knowledge gained by mediation of concepts as above indicated is knowledge in a perspective. Change the dominant concept through new experiences, which are themselves made feasible in the first place by the concept itself, and the array of relevant facts is selectively modified. These dominant concepts are extraordinarily labile. Accompanying their disintegration or enlargement, understanding of social reality may gain (or lose) in objectivity, and the effects thereof in the order of activity, that is, in individual conduct and in corporate construction or destruction of institutions, are readily to be detected. When conceptual structures pertaining to social reality change throughout the nation some sort of "reform" or "revolution" is inevitable, that is, men begin to act differently since there is a constant struggle to adapt action to reality.

The very possibility that directive ideas exist and that they vary in their capacity to condense or to focalize facts is the ground not only for optimism but likewise for pessimism. When human society is so constituted that there are in circulation multitudes of such ideas which complement or clash with one another, and thus in proper combination afford a best and most complete perspective of social reality, it can happen that for impure motives some of these directive ideas will be suppressed in one society or another in favor of developing an intellectual and moral jaundice among the people. In the past self-imposed limitations of peoples in this respect arose more or less unwittingly. Today, the gouging out of spiritual eyes is the deliberate objective of certain political ministers of propaganda. (Confer the Pastoral Letter of the German Bishops released in August, 1938.) The new propaganda is nothing more or less than (a) the explicit discovery of the dependence of awareness of social reality on conceptual structures and (b) the systematic practical application of this principle by controlling the circulation of directive ideas not from motives of decency, truth or justice but for reasons of self-interest and lust for power. There have always been vital lies in society, that is, mythical directive ideas, but they have at least been traceable for the most part to ignorance or to good motives. Today this is no longer the case.

FALSE sciences like astrology, alchemy and much of pre-scientific medicine have demonstrated that when the perception of reality depends in part on the aid of "hypothesis" an entire system of falsifications of fact can be developed. The reason for this is that though hypothesis throws a floodlight on facts it is readily ousted by its imitation, namely, myth. A myth is a structure of thought which conceals fact. Eighteenth-century "phlogiston" is a sufficient example of a mythical factor in chemistry, which was used to unify a tissue of absurdities. We learn from the false sciences that not only are hypotheses or directive ideas when compared with one another to be judged as better or worse, that is, as comparatively adequate or inadequate, but also that such ideas can be wholly erroneous, i.e., mythical. They become wholly erroneous when one or the other of the multiple universes of the imagination is substituted for the true, common, objective, principle-controlled world.

Material reality, which to be known must be ensnared by valid hypothesis, has a great advantage over us. We are not simple-minded enough for nature. Not only have we the capacity to detect her true lineaments, but we are capable of disregarding fact and of substituting in its place wraithlike equivalents (myths) which are the offspring of the free human imagination. The world may have been circumnavigated but it still remains flat for the natives of Zion City, Illinois. On the whole, however, in natural science there seem to be superseded as time passes the imaginary entities and processes which are as great a tribute to human absurdity as authentic science is to human constancy and success in searching for insights respecting things as they are.

In respect of social reality the counterparts for "phlogiston" are not hard to find. For example, the Florida Land Boom illustrated the nature of psychic phlogiston. A Ponzi-wise idea invested the spirit first of one person, then of a second, and finally of thousands who wanted nothing better than to have finished with the hard world which tends to exact a return for anything given. People are ever ready to begin business in the cheerful world of imagination where nothing is demanded and everything is freely bestowed. Where do the values exist which enter into such fabulous exchanges as occurred, for instance, when in seventeenth-century Holland enormous sums of money were spent for tulip bulbs? They exist in and are authentic productions of the human spirit and they constitute mythical social reality so long as they endure. If the players do not call for a showdown

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the game will continue until mute Nature herself seizes tongue and shouts cheat.

Delusions of this character in the economic world are subject to empirical check. Others cannot be handled so readily. During the course of the Miller delusion, when thousands believed the end of the world was to occur on a certain day, there was nothing for it but to wait the fatal day. In that case, if I remember aright, the phlogiston consisted in an unregulated imagination practising exegesis on some biblical passages. A third example of social phlogiston is provided in current racism. By means of the substitution of an imaginary nordicism for the nordicism which has a certain amount of respectability among anthropologists, millions of people in Germany seem to believe themselves united by "blood" and therefore a unit by dispensation of God and nature rather than a unit merely by reason of culture which is the outcome of the dispensation of God and man and hence in many respects factitious. This common blood exists by act of the German spirit and has singular properties. Its business is not to circulate in bodies but to circulate in imaginations where it can boil or subside by fiat of the ministers of propaganda. It can create brotherhoods (and obversely concentration camps), override ancient boundaries and even engender gods. This is really a mighty work.

How is the drunken and deranged imagination to be restored to sobriety? Apparently by criticism. Only the curious, ingenuous and dispassionate eyes of the child detected in the fable that the Emperor of China displaying his gorgeous gown was in reality naked. Criticism has the same kind of eyesight for social phlogiston.

Criticism which can find social phlogiston may be absent from a society for either of two reasons: of which the first is that the society does not possess any critical power; and the second is that critical power, though existing, is prevented from being exercised. There is no critical power when those who are heavily handled by any prevalent delusion identify it with what is natural, necessary and objective. Such people accept having their heads chopped off, asking only that the axe handle be adorned, like the scythe of the symbolic specter leading the dance of death in stained-glass windows of the Middle Ages, with "varied and attractive ribbons." The other method for withstanding criticism, the concentration camp method, needs no comment in aid of its elucidation.

The discussion of the existence in nature of the better classes (identified as those in possession of commanding resources of property plus their descendants), the quondam delusion that labor unions were criminal conspiracies, divine right of kings, the absolute equality of all men, the white man's burden, the inevitable inefficiency of government ownership of utilities, Father Divine's God and similar delusions agree in one respect. Out of some circumstance in nature, out of some configuration of fact there is built up by the imagination a whole structure of beliefs. When these are shared by a sufficiency of people, who must, of course, confuse their own construction with objective social reality plus nature's deepest meaning in one sense or another, a special sort of full-fledged social reality exists which is the offspring of pure imagination. These delusions are made real things when institutions are built in their likeness. This accomplished, the exponents of this now institutionalized patch of the world view of imagination endeavor to make the objective social world come to an end. Every dream, foolish or wise, attempts to become a vested interest.

Frightened or repelled by the extravaganzas of the world of sick and unregulated imagination, some philosophers have tried to employ as a corrective a kind of social nominalism. Nothing could be more profoundly misconceived than this approach to what is a real disease. Instances of what I mean here are to be found in Korzybski's attempt, in his "Science and Sanity," to abolish Aristotelian thought from top to bottom, and in that amateurish best seller of Mr. Chase on the "Tyranny of Words." Social nominalism will effect no cures. This nominalism is a materialistic ontologism which necessarily fosters anarchy. The only adequate philosophic correctives are available neither from it nor from idealism, but from a critical realism to be found already elaborated in the "De Veritate" of Aquinas—a much neglected and profound work.

Critical realism accommodates itself to the fundamental fact that the world of existents cannot be in all respects or in the most important respects apprehended without psychic structures. The world in awareness it discovers to be the outcome of collaborative activity of the thing to be known and its knower. Since responsible and free action can only take place with reference to the world as known, a wholesome life both individual and corporate is absolutely dependent not only on a moral will but on purified, adequate and just directive ideas. The formation of such ideas is the essential condition of an understanding of the world about us and of its progressive mastery by science. The operation of these ideas is the essential means for the attainment of reasonable social reform. The dissemination of these ideas, plus the dissemination of the knowledge respecting the circumstances of their origin and their constructive function in the world of thought, is the essential requisite of a sound scheme of education.

Something should be said in conclusion respecting the criteria for distinguishing valid psychic structures from those invalid. No such structures are the production of any individual except in the crudest shape. All valid ideas originating with

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man respecting material and non-material reality are the outcome of generations of insights which supplement and correct one another. Only ends remain constant. This means that it is always certain that the whole of nature and society exists for individual persons. But the character of nature and society in detail and the precise means for procuring the emergence of significant persons are not laid down once and for all. Each generation has a new spirit as certainly as it is composed of a unique group of individuals. The present influences not only the future but the past as well since in respect of its social reality it reconstitutes the past. Development, commentary, change are inescapable. But development means vital continuity with the past. All good things are deeply rooted. If they are still in shallow soil they are not good for now, however they may be when, having weathered the storm of criticism, they look out some future day on glorious surroundings.

Any idea, scientific, philosophic or social, which has had its day and has been definitely refuted by the logic either of man or of time, upon its resurgence simply shows that each generation throws off its own hordes of barbarians. There is really no assurance that the barbarians will not provisionally conquer, that is, that diseased imagination will not attain rule in one department or another of the human world. It is certain that the death of criticism is the life of barbarism as it signalizes also the disappearance of the practical means for telling whether a directive idea of any kind is true or false, good or bad. The test of these ideas, since they are not self-evident, consists in their long-time power to withstand criticism, always assuming that they are not shot down by barbarism. Such is the negative test. The positive test is found in the productions which they give in terms of human character and in terms of responsible human freedom.

Agriculture and Reconstruction

By VIRGIL MICHEL

THROUGHOUT the history of civilization it has been taken for granted that a sound agriculture is basic to the welfare of any nation or country. The independent farmers are the sturdy yeomanry on which our inherited Anglo-Saxon culture in particular has depended, not only for the bare necessaries of life, but for the fostering of the basic virtues that have characterized that culture. This is but saying in other words that the condition of agriculture is of highest importance to the welfare of a nation—not only in reference to the more mechanical aspects of the production process, but in reference to satisfactory living and culture. It is vital for a nation to keep some of its best citizens on the farm, since a sound country life is the natural cradle of the virtues of independence, self-reliance, creative intelligence, experimental enterprise, etc.

In our highly industrialized city life there is less opportunity for the growth or development of these virtues. The average man of the city is totally dependent on money for everything he needs, even for the basic and essential needs of food, clothing and shelter. Hence he is quite dependent for them on the smooth functioning of the nation-wide economic system of our day, basic to which in turn is the financial system, still considerably in private control for private profit. The moment the gigantic economic machine ceases to function with perfect smoothness city dwellers in greater or lesser numbers are set completely adrift on the sea of life, and quite helplessly so.

But our agriculture has also become largely mechanized and commercialized. To a considerable extent—certainly for all commercial or cash-crop farming—modern agriculture is almost as dependent on the smooth functioning of the entire economic machine as is city life. Hence the commercial farmer meets with the same fate as the city dweller as soon as the machine does not function properly. But the collapse of the farmer is a much greater calamity for our general life and culture than is the collapse of the city-dweller, since the whole nation depends on the farmer for the basic necessaries of life, which must be had at all times, depression or no. Only when the ordinary producers of a nation's basic necessaries are much more independent than today of the influence of industrial crises, will these crises cease to be the completely crushing catastrophes that they now are. It is therefore imperative to make the farmer again as independent of economic crises as possible in his own personal life; to give him an economic security of his own that can weather the national crises and enable his vocational group to function as a solid basis from which to rebuild the nation's otherwise tottering economic structure.

This truth and principle is basic to one of the chief planks of modern agrarianism—that of a return to the family farm and to the practise of combined subsistence farming and of further production for the market, but the former always prior to the latter. It is only the latter aspect of family farming that will be greatly affected by industrial crises and not the former. Thus the "backbone of the nation" will be restored at least

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to a minimum security and stability that nothing can take away from it.

Now there are two ways in which farmers can get back to this kind of agriculture: (1) by returning to a more primitive stage of fewer needs and cruder fulfilment of these; i.e., by "turning the clock back"; or (2) by going forward to a richer life. The industrial-minded enemies of modern agrarianism, of course, point with scorn to the first method as the one sponsored by the new rural prophets. But no modern agrarian will choose anything but the second method, and he sees many concrete ways and means for achieving this method by reason of modern scientific advances in both agricultural knowledge and farm technique.

Modern agrarians are sponsoring more and more the wide spread of bio-dynamic methods of farming, as described, e.g., by E. Pfeiffer in his interesting little book on "Bio-Dynamic Farming," and likewise by many pamphlets of agricultural research centers in our country. These methods are opposed to the hitherto fashionable type of large-scale mechanized farming, of wholesale use of artificial fertilizer, etc. Of course, certain industries will object, and are even now trying to keep knowledge of bio-dynamic agriculture from spreading. Finance-capitalism will not loosen its grip on any aspect of our life and culture without a struggle.

Bio-dynamic farming makes possible the raising of larger diversified crops on smaller acreages without deterioration of soil, while the "modern" mechanized farming gradually yields smaller crops per acre with deterioration of soil. At once many will object to the new farming by reason of present over-production of agricultural crops. The objection is not met by recalling that much present over-production is in reality under-consumption. If the scientific experiments of bio-dynamic farming, carefully made and recorded over many years, are a proper index of judgment—as they must be—we are indeed facing the possibility of greatly multiplying our agricultural yields.

But we are also facing another possibility that "modern" industry is not too happy to foster—and that is the scientific increase of ways and means of using farm products for industrial manufacture. The possibilities so far discovered in this infant branch of scientific research are already sufficient to open up wide visions of future industries deriving their raw materials from the farm; and so far science has only scratched the surface of this new field. Many present industries will try to oppose the spread of these progressive economic activities, even as they have succeeded in buying up and suppressing many new inventions that would make their plants and their practises obsolete. But some day finance-capitalism will be faced with the alternative of seeing these new directions develop without it, or else of stepping in and getting a monopoly. Then we shall in turn be faced with the social problem of giving over these new industries to the present centralizing and monopolizing frankenstein or of organizing them in neighborhood centers under neighborhood control and cooperation.

There is no time or place to enter further into discussion of this choice at present. But the question is a most important one from the cultural and social angle, let alone the economic side of it. The entire agrarian movement has many angles; and there are many degrees or stages of achieving a life closer to the soil. Some day we may even witness a wholesale return to some degree of subsistence-homestead living on the part of factory workers—since we are now threatened through modern advances in labor-saving devices with the choice of ever greater industrial unemployment or else ever greater part-time employment coupled with subsistence-living.

What is definitely true of the farm life of today is that the real conveniences and cultural advantages, hitherto confined almost exclusively to the city, have already begun their trek to the country. Modern industrialism thrived on the exclusive privileges and cultural advantages connected with metropolitan city life. Thus it attained its stranglehold on the culture and life of the whole country, and made all else subservient to it. Without denying its evident historical achievements and contributions to human progress, we must acknowledge today that this industrialism seems to have run its course, to have brought us to an *impasse*. In its specific type of yesterday and today it is definitely dated as belonging to the seventeenth to twentieth centuries or so. We are facing the possibility and need of transcending it, not by complete opposition, or repudiation, but by improving the very implements it has given us and applying them in the furtherance of man's age-long dream of a truly human life for all men. The field of application is undoubtedly the countryside, starved for some generations of the cultural advantages of recent progress, but again rearing its head in hope. If that hope is vain, then the outlook is dark for social reconstruction.

Wanderer's Song

I have seen move away from me,
As down the changes of a sea,
Many a crab-slow memory.

I have seen under water sit—
Jewel-bright and pebble-definite—
Things that would not be, out of it.

Where shall I go whose songs are all
Perfected in a waterfall;
Is there no place for me at all?

ROSALIE MOORE.

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My First School of Individual Instruction

By ELLA FRANCES LYNCH

ON A HILLOCK of grey granite between two mountain ranges a sovereign state had plumped a schoolhouse, a square, six-windowed hideosity as grey and grim as its own futile syllabus. The saving feature was a titanic doorstone, a primeval rock like that which marks the grave of Saint Patrick in old County Down, and on this rock the new teacher stepped from the buckboard to survey her mission. The only evidences of life were a brown road galloping off into the woods, a brook slithering down a gulch to a blue-eyed pond, and a log house sending up a plume of blue smoke. The forest begirt her with a hundred leagues of age-old articulate silence.

Within: rough board walls, bare windows, painted pine blackboards, furniture of local carpentry, a box stove. By way of distinguishing the faculty, a square platform two cubits long upheld a chair and lidded desk. The visible tools of culture consisted in a heap of nondescript textbooks, none whole or clean, and a maimed dictionary.

The college: at their desks sat twenty abnormally silent boys and girls between the ages of eight and sixteen. Acquaintance disclosed them to be patois-speakers, French, Indian, American, mixed of blood and creed. The younger ones were analphabetic and had no English. The seniors could deal with odd spots in the current first reader and had a few monosyllables for regional activities. None had ever seen a village, church, train. Their homes were destitute of books, pictures, newspapers. Mail came spasmodically. Their chief means of worldly contact was the cavalcade of farm wagons which semi-annually visited the port of call for supplies and brought back tales of "foreign" life—lights brighter than day, houses on both sides of the road. Nevertheless, they were observant youths; their resourcefulness had been developed through hunting, fishing, trapping, helping to grow provender, preserve foods, mold tallow candles and bullets, and numerous other home industries. The state had not, however, tampered with their natural ignorance.

From time to time, graduates of the state normal school would essay this remote post. Unhappily, their purely intellectualized training had stultified the imaginative faculty which otherwise might have vested their strange novitiate with an epic glow. Each and all lacked the intuitive comprehension of the whole being which was common to early epochs when man studied himself subjectively and gained an intimate knowledge of his fellow men through observation and self-knowledge. Although their training had equipped them to experiment on the bodily side of children with scientific standards, they naturally could not apply these standards direct to the inner life. When the young pedagogue, regarding his charges as fact-containers, would attempt to measure their intelligence by questioning, he only wore a bald spot in their minds. Any endeavor to stuff them with abstract knowledge or to apply the graded curriculum was like trying to reshape a football: it merely hardened them to resistance and increased their immense capacity for being bored. The only enthusiasm they showed was at dismissal.

When he despaired of finding ingress to the minds of these children, the teacher would sag into indifference and meditate means of escape. At this point his penetrating, desk-shy pupils were likely to prove embarrassingly helpful. One bored young Ichabod who had deserted his rostrum for a canter on horseback returned to find the doorstone barricaded by a circle of sinewy young arms and hostile eyes. He ran home. His pathologic successor, after prospecting vainly in her turn the hard young skulls for an opening for items of examination scope, resigned herself to time-killing until pay day, merely snapping out an occasional, "Get to work. I am not here to learn your lessons for you." One dark day as she stood drumming on the rain-streaked windowpane she heard at her shoulder a sibilant "*See!*" Turning, she confronted a lithe young half-breed with slit-like eyes, his bared brown arm upraised, steely muscles flexing like serpents, fingers curving significantly. Seized with a double-chill, she also ran.

From the technical standpoint the new teacher's equipment was to a great extent negative. Current pedagogy left her cold. She had never sympathized with those scientific experiments on external processes and characteristics based on the idea that there can be no positive knowledge of things unless they are perceptible to the senses and the intellect. Hence, she had retained that inimitable teaching gift, the childlike faculty of interchanging action and reaction with the souls of children. Instinctively she realized that knowing children is more important than knowing subjects and that nothing matters about a school but its success in refining and uplifting human beings.

Furthermore, as a directive, she carried in her head an epitome of home-gleaned philosophy. Her father had said, "Good teaching flows from an understanding of Nature and children. Don't go against Nature. Avoid haste. Be simple. Complexity turns light into darkness."

Her mother had spoken on ethics. "Teach the

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children to be good. Unless they learn what is right and have the will to do it, you have no business sharpening their wits to prey on society nor putting into their hands such powerful tools as reading and writing to be used against their neighbors."

A brother had given her a ground-hold on method. "Don't try to teach them too much. Where two bushels of seed will give a crop, four bushels will give nothing. Know your soil before you plow. Many a fine field is ruined by plowing deeper than the soil will stand."

The teacher's path gained further illumination from principles of the teaching art handed down by tradition and capitalized by the ablest of Ireland's hedge schoolmasters. One was, that a teacher gets through intuition the guidance he is ready and worthy to receive. Hence her decision that no lesson or no action, from the most serious to the most trivial, should penetrate the program unless grounded on moral purpose. Then came her resolution and solution: "I shall teach these children to draw a straight line. Basic and simple, though not easy, it is the key to learning because it starts the habit of turning out faultless work."

She bade the class rise and say with her the Lord's Prayer. Though none joined in aloud, all gave undeviating attention. From the buckboard's freightage she then distributed pencils and notebooks, in which she wrote the pupil's name and dated the first page. Stepping to the board she announced, "This is our first lesson," and drew a straight, slanting downstroke, following it with a row of parallel strokes.

Being human, the children jumped to the conclusion that there is nothing much to drawing a straight line. A trial confuted this opinion. Yet the simplicity of the copy appealed to their inner sense of fitness and roused their instinct to conquer. They applied themselves to the undertaking with every muscle from tongue to toe, laboring on even when a straight line refused to be born, as they could judge for themselves by applying a straightedge. The teacher meanwhile walked about, correcting posture, blue-penciling, encouraging briefly.

After half an hour's practise came recess. Although the children rejoiced to escape outdoors and exchange confidences, they quickly swarmed back to find out "what next." It was the selfsame lesson in observation and orderly habit-making: the effort to accomplish perfectly a straight slanting line that began exactly at one horizontal line, continued down through three spaces, and stopped exactly on another horizontal line. It was based on the principle that not a step should be taken uncomprehendingly by the pupil. His religion he should accept on faith; in secular branches he should do nothing without seeing why he does it. Thus he learns to be thorough. He forms the habit of doing a thing right instead of following his own sweet will. The mastery of the straight line establishes an ideal that more or less governs his conduct. The children were led to point out their own errors and to realize that a fault in the writing is really a fault in the writer. No erasing was permitted; simply: "Cross out the error and try again." The idea was not to make their work beautiful but to make it right. Then in time they would realize that rightness *is* beauty, and that rightness in work has a profound effect in establishing rightness of character. Each pupil went ahead at his own gait, there was neither speeding up for the quick nor holding back for the slow. When a child could exhibit a faultless row of strokes he was given the proximate copy, the upcurve as in the letter "i." When he showed perfection in this, he was permitted—oh, crown of fame!—to place the i-dot and tackle the downcurve, as in the letter "m."

For three weeks the all-day writing lessons continued unabated. By maintaining a good bodily position and relaxing frequently, the pupils escaped any approach to exhaustion. A weary youngster would catch the teacher's eye, get a responsive nod, slip outdoors and trot around the hillock, then return quietly to his desk. The younger pupils were free to go home after an hour or so, but none did, preferring work. In three weeks all could draw faultlessly the stroke and curves. They then were allowed to combine them into letters; when there were no unknown letters left, they formed words for which they sought expression. Thereafter the drawing-writing lesson took second place, yielding the post of honor to other divisions of English, which comprised the course for many months.

AS THE days passed, the teacher felt poignantly the enormous loss these children had to make good. While their home life had formed in them the elements of upright citizenship through the habits of honesty, frugality and industry, and while Mother Nature had sharpened their intelligence and set them hungering for knowledge, they were pitifully poor in literature, the container of knowledge. How instruct their ignorance and yet retain that natural strength of thought and directness of speech unattainable by the over-schooled?

The teacher believed with the Greeks that words are more than things: that they are spiritual vitalizers, and that a training in the use and power of words is the chief part of education. And all the evidence in the known world was against the idea that language is best cultivated by processing the child, or that the gorgeous adventure of teaching him to read should be tortured and mangled into conformity with a theory of mechanics. The printed page should not be brought to the notice of a child before he can write down the words that grip him inwardly. Likewise, he should have learned to observe closely, he should possess a

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good vocabulary in a literary context, know the alphabet, be able to spell 1,000 or more simple words, and be able to read script. Thus educated before being book-bound, the child retains his naturally intense mental energy; he develops such a devouring eagerness to get at the stories in books that he will invariably teach himself to read if someone will answer his questions.

She continued to ponder her program: The instruction must be oral. It should be poetry, the best literature of the ages. While she may take her subject from textbooks, she must transform it into suitable word-pictures before she gives it to her pupils. Nothing must be blurred. All must be so clearly and beautifully expressed that the children can picture the whole lesson in their minds and paint it in water colors or chalks. Hence, we shall begin with the best and finest: Genesis and Matthew. The exquisite literary fitness of the biblical story of Creation, the orderly sequence and irresistible speech of the Sermon on the Mount, communicated through the living voice to their young unencumbered minds, so free to take and so strong to hold, shall form the basis of our educational pyramid.

Then the teacher formulated the by-laws for the republic of letters where cramped minds would relax and unfold in harmony with Nature's rhythmical beauty and enriching silence:

No marking system, averages, examinations, nor other brain-pecking. All written work should be done in notebooks, dated, thus forming a daily record and inspiring the pupil to strive for bettering his previous efforts. Each day should represent an honest day's work.

Eliminate fads and frills by applying to every subject and every detail the test: Is this worth learning? Is this the time to teach it? Is it something the pupil will be able to continue by his own efforts out of school?

The teacher, unprogressively, will head the school, commanding, not requesting, a dictator, but not a tyrant. As it happened, discipline appealed to the regiment. The fact of being "under orders" gave them added height.

The opening exercises took on at once a definite character. The second day, following the Lord's Prayer, the teacher recited that profound and thrilling verse from the book of Genesis: "In the beginning God created heaven and earth." The next morning she repeated this verse and included the second, continuing in this way from day to day, reciting *da capo* and adding the next verse until she had completed the chapter. The children soon found their voices and joined in gratefully, their rapt attention and photographic minds enabling them to formulate the pictures and memorize the words. At the end of 31 days—school kept Saturdays—all could recite unerringly the 31 verses of the first chapter of Genesis. The Sermon on the Mount was taught in like manner, the 111 verses being mastered before the school year closed.

When these wary young creatures coaxed the teacher outdoors for an intermission, she utilized the occasion to introduce the poem of Hiawatha. Thereafter, the recesses were taken up with this epic, the children entering heartily into memorizing and spontaneously dramatizing, even bringing a babe to school, making him a "linden cradle," singing to him, although the lullaby of these husky lads set the eagles screaming. In a few weeks, without consciousness of effort, they could repeat unerringly some 500 lines, which they loved to impart to the home folks in the evening.

After memorizing had ruled the program for three weeks it stepped down and spelling stepped up. Here is the rest of the curriculum in bare outline. The children *learned how to learn;* then they spelled indefatigably, from 5 to 20 words a day for the eight-year-old to 40 or 100 for his older brother. Those who say this cannot be done have never known the unstuffed child. Nor did they ever need "review." What they learned was for keeps.

The pupils taught themselves the alphabet somehow and came eventually to reading lessons. A simple, direct, unencumbered method of teaching reading will take space to expound and clarify, just because the inventors of method have labored so excruciatingly to make it a complex farce.

Reading was taught as one part of English, others being spelling, memorizing, writing, observation, story-telling; it was not taught as a separate subject. And—let me load the blunderbuss for the infatuated advocate of "sight-reading"—pupils were allowed to read nothing of which they could not first spell every word! Since the test of method is, or ought to be, does it work? let me reassure my readers. The beginners could read by themselves the entire volume of Stevenson's "Child's Garden of Verses" before the year's close. The seniors could and did labor happily at their English assignments, open dictionary before them, half a day on a stretch; after lunch, another half-day stretch.

"Do we have arithmetic?" asked an eager young French lad. "Certainly, if you can make it for yourselves." Then the scheme of building an individual system in notebook arithmetic was indicated; thereafter pupils from the age of ten labored lustily in half-day stretches, creating number lessons progressively, which took them individually through the four operations with integers, common and decimal fractions, compound quantities. Here was an instance of taking advantage of the wonderful fact that number is the sole science that is self-created. Language, poetry, spelling, must be aided from without, but not so number.

The next teacher roundly denounced "that teacher" for demoralizing the school to where "nobody could grade it."

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Rugs under the Five Year Plan

By BRUCE KAFAROFF

IT IS in the region west of the Caspian and east of the Black Sea that the greatest of oriental rugs were once woven on looms both crude and primitive. Persia is reputed to have produced the finest carpets of the Orient and therefore of the world, but Persian rugs have none of the grace and almost unbelievable perfection of the rugs made by the people of the Caucasus. Turkestan has produced rugs whose beauty is celebrated, but they are of a wild design and a bold ugliness of color, the beauty of savagery. It is the Caucasian rugs that were the work of masters, sure in their design, perfect in their workmanship.

Looking at some of the other products of the hand of man, it is impossible to believe that these rugs were woven by man alone, and it is manifest that their equal will never again be produced.

In the Caucasus today the weaving of rugs is under the Five Year Plan. The government has a blanket monopoly on the production and sale of rugs, and no one is allowed to export these rugs privately. Most of the Caucasian rugs are now made in large factories, by hand still, but under conditions that have a tragic resemblance to the manner in which an American automobile is made. The novice weavers are instructed in the art by teachers who are employed for just that purpose. Designers plan the pattern of the rug; little except the actual tying of the knots is left to the individual. After the weaver has finished his work he is paid in paper money, which is almost worthless and will buy only the necessities of life, and very few of them. Since rug-weaving is so poorly paid, it is becoming a lost art. Few people work at it, and the few who do have an interest that is less than half-hearted. The making and marketing of oriental rugs was formerly the most important industry of the Caucasus region; now it is a trade that is practically extinct.

The rugs that are woven today by these people are decidedly inferior, and are a mere shadow of the former glory of the weavers of the region. Chemical dyes are used instead of the vegetable ones employed by the old artizans. Vegetable dyes produce a blending of colors, a silken sheen, a fabric that will last many lifetimes. Chemical dyes produce colors that hurt the eyes, they soon fade and they also appreciably shorten the life span of the rug.

In the days of the czars every mother taught her daughters the art of weaving, and these daughters worked long and enthusiastically making rugs as dowries for their future homes. Every family strove to make rugs better than the ones woven by their next door neighbors, and no pains were spared to produce carpets of magnificence and lasting beauty. The wool was shorn from the sheep in the spring of the year, and the women took it to some nearby river and washed it carefully. Combing followed the washing of the wool, and it was then spun on a spinning-wheel.

Dyeing was a most important process. A few dyes were applied at home, such as the boiled green shells of walnuts to produce brown and the use of indigo for dark blue, but most of the dyeing of the wool was done by a man in the village who was a professional. His knowledge of dyeing was usually sound; this was a profession that was often hereditary in certain families. To obtain various shades he used all kinds of herbs and roots and many secret processes. One popular way of obtaining a red that was both brilliant and absolutely proof against fading was by using the cochineal insect, gathered from the plants that they lived upon, plunged in hot water, and then placed in the sun to dry until they became so hard that they might be converted into a dye. The care taken in the coloring of Caucasian rugs was not wasted, for the colors never fade, no matter how old the rug is, which is more than can be said for synthetic dyes. And these modern rugs have to be chemically washed when they arrive in this country to tone down their harsh colors.

With the old rugs the actual weaving was done on a very simple loom in the home of the weaver. The loom consisted of two upright posts placed in the ground at a distance apart which would make the width of the rug. Two crosspieces were set on these posts, one at the top and one at the bottom. The warp and weft framework, which in Caucasian rugs was made of wool, was strung on these poles, and the crosspieces were fastened so that the woven portion and its framework could be moved along as the weaver progressed with his work. Two tools were used in the making of these rugs, a crude comb to push the knots together and a pair of shears to even up the pile.

When the framework had been completed, the weaver seated himself in front of the loom and began his long task. Two kinds of knots are used in the making of the pile oriental rugs; one is the Sehna, or Persian, knot and the other is the Ghiordes, or Turkish, knot. The Ghiordes was the one used in the old Caucasian rugs. It is made by looping the yarn through the warp and then bringing the ends to the front again. Needless to say the weaving of even a small rug was a lengthy task, since there are hundreds of knots to the

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square inch in an oriental rug, and the weaving of a room size one took from six months to a year, or more.

The actual pattern of the rug was often made up as the weaver went along. Sometimes a rug that belonged to the family was copied over and over again, but many people preferred to create new designs each time; judging from the patterns they originated, a talent for designing must be inborn in every Caucasian. The pattern of these rugs was always simple—a clean-cut beauty that did not depend upon loud colors or flashy designs, but on a natural sense on the part of the weaver, and skill in his work. That is the secret of the old Caucasian rug.

In summer the weaver worked outside in the heat of the sun, since his house would be like a furnace on a hot day. In winter he retreated inside to use the shelter of the stone walls of his house as protection against the fierce blasts of wind that swept through his mountain home. The only heat that most peasant houses were provided with was that which came from an earthen pot called a mangal. This round pot was filled with live coals and charcoal was put on top of them; then the mangal was left outdoors until the thick smoke of the charcoal had burned off. When brought into the house this mangal did not do much in the way of warming the room, but served to warm the weaver's fingers when they became stiff and numb with cold, so that tying each knot was a task.

When a rug was finished it was placed on the floor and used until it began to show signs of wear, then a new rug was woven and the old one sold. That is why most of the Caucasian rugs found in this country are semi-antiques.

THE CAUCASIAN rugs are usually found in scatter sizes with the exception of the Karabagh which is sometimes found in room size. In Kuba the rugs are woven by Armenians and Jews since these people make up most of the population there. The old Armenian Kuba rugs are very valuable, but the people there do not specialize in the type of rug that has a pile. The solidly woven and hard-surfaced rug known as Soumak or, as it is also called, Cashmere rug, which is usually found in room size, comes from Kuba too, and the Khilim, another type of rug without a pile, is also made there.

When Mohammedans pray a law of their religion demands that they pray upon a clean surface, and that is why there are prayer rugs. When a Moslem travels he finds it very difficult to find a clean place to kneel and pray upon, so he carries his prayer rug with him. A prayer rug may be distinguished from all others by the Mihrab, a large central figure that comes to a point at one end. Usually a religious Mohammedan has a prayer rug made specially for him, and when he prays he always places his rug so that the point of the central design is toward Mecca; then he kneels on the rug and places his forehead on the point. When his prayer has been offered, he folds the rug up carefully and carries it so that it cannot become contaminated or soiled. No true Mohammedan would ever think of walking on a prayer rug. The care which is given these is the reason why they are usually so well preserved. Prayer rugs often pass through a family as heirlooms; many that are still in good condition are well over a hundred years old.

Saddle bags are other products of this region which occasionally find their way into foreign markets. These are used to carry baggage on horseback, and are woven strikingly. The Caucasian trunk is called a mafrash and when a family moves from one home or village to another, their mattresses, comforters and bed clothes are carried in this. A mafrash is woven of wool; when in use it is laced together at the sides so that it is the size and shape of a large packing-case.

In the days of the czars many buyers from the United States bought as many as five or six thousand rugs at a time in the Caucasus region.

The most popular of the old Caucasian rugs are the Karabagh from the district of Azerbaijan, the Kazak and the Genje, which are named after the cities in which they are made, and the ones from the Daghestan mountains. Some of these are the Daghestan, Kabistan, Shirvan, Khileh, Derbent, Talish, Chi-chi and Perabeden. There are many others from this region.

The wholesale market for these rugs was Baku on the Caspian Sea. The Kazak, Karabagh and Genje rugs were marketed in the city of Tiflis in Russian Georgia. Dealers from Constantinople came to these cities and bought rugs, later selling them in their own country and thereby making Constantinople the largest rug buying market in the world.

At the present time people in Europe are not selling the old type Caucasian rugs they happen to have, because they realize these rugs are bound to increase greatly in value in the near future.

The Amtorg, the American representative of the Soviet Government, tried to introduce the modern Caucasian rug to the American market; but the crude appearance of these rugs, and the fact that they seem machine made because they are so accurately designed and so lacking in individualism, caused a lack of interest in these rugs in the United States. The rug buyer can readily understand that there can be little beauty and individualism in a rug turned out by an underpaid, unwilling worker, who is doing his work under compulsion. One cannot help but prefer the rugs that were made by enthusiastic, skilled workers who wove to grace their own floors and did the weaving in a spirit of friendly competition.

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Views & Reviews

BY MICHAEL WILLIAMS

AS 1939 is substituted for 1938 on our letter-heads and newspaper date lines, those of us, probably a great number, who find it difficult to adjust our habits to the change and write '38 instead of '39 on our letters may console ourselves as we struggle to acquire the new habit by reflecting that after all things in general have not changed very much. The vast and turgid flood of New Year oratory and journalism, reviewing the dismal events of the past year, and more or less voicing as much optimism, or hope, or resolution to be optimistic and hopeful as can be mustered up, in the new year, has receded with that rapidity characteristic of our speed-up age, and we are all left pretty well where we were before the horns and bells and champagne corks competed with a few church bells on New Year's Eve. Of course, for those who made good resolutions which they are really strong enough in will power to keep in practise, there will be a real difference; but the mortality rate of new year resolutions is notoriously high.

However, this time it may be different. It is fairly evident that a general realization of the fact that we are facing both personally and collectively a national situation of extraordinary gravity swept through the land during the last weeks of 1938 and was reflected in our private and public utterances as the new year arrived. And as the new year proceeds, it may become evident that a real and lasting determination to take part in all worth-while efforts to deal with our national problems will increase among American Catholics. Certainly, the desire to do so is at present strong among us. Our differences of opinion among ourselves as to the most important or, at any rate, the most pressing of the problems we should deal with, and as to the best way of dealing with them, while decidedly great, need not injure our general cooperation if we can manage to maintain unity in fundamental loyalty to the Church.

That of course is a truism; but also it is a mere windy platitude unless we attach a meaning to it upon which we are really in sincere agreement. For my personal contribution to a discussion of the general theme, I would suggest that the criterion of our public activities as Catholics consists in our adherence to the official teachings of the Church, and not our purely personal interest in, or zeal for, this or that particular cause or movement. Now it follows, of course, that we are not in a position to apply that criterion unless our knowledge of what the Church teaches is far more general and correct and thorough than is ordinarily the case. (Naturally, I am thinking about the laity, and writing as an average layman.) For example, it seems to me that far too many American Catholic laymen are in grave danger of being injuriously affected by the circumstance that the principle of purely private judgment is more powerful—or, at least, more prevalent, more taken for granted—in the United States than the principle of obedience to legitimate authority.

It is in connection with the main controversy of our times, which has come to its crisis this year, over forms of government, that the danger of the principle of private judgment most directly faces lay Catholics. In clerical circles, of course, there is not only more knowledge of the teaching of the Church on the subject of the fundamental principles which should prevail in this controversy, but also more experience in their practical application. Legitimate authority in clerical life is a reality, not a mere abstraction. That is why the Church has come through all the storms and stresses of the ages, including defects of the human instruments of her clerical side, as well as all other perils, triumphantly. In plain terms, it is the proper observance of the necessary function of episcopal government in the Church that keeps the light of human liberty burning in civil society. Today as never before in human history has it become most certain that Catholic doctrine is the ultimate corner-stone of civilized personal and corporate liberty. But if Christian doctrine degenerates into mere individual sentiment, it will disappear. As a new year's resolution for the Catholic laity I would venture to recommend, for all of us, an increase of the study of, and, thereafter, intelligent observance of, the laws and traditions of the discipline as well as the inner spiritual principles of the teaching of our Church. No higher service could we give to our own democratic nation in its hour of testing.

Communications

HOW ABOUT CREDIT UNIONS?

Greenwich, Conn.

TO the Editors: A document of singular interest has recently been published by a group of Wall Street investment bankers; so interesting that I believe it is worth bringing to the attention of those who seldom get the opportunity of reading Wall Street literature. The document is a prospectus offering the public an opportunity to invest $7,500,000 in Beneficial Industrial Loan Corporation, a really "gilt-edged" enterprise. Or maybe the word should be "guilt-edged."

According to the prospectus, the business of the corporation is "making small loans to individuals and related activities." It maintains 373 offices in twenty-six states and has two offices in Canada. With its subsidiaries "it constitutes one of the largest organizations in this business in the United States." The business has been developed "in response to the credit needs of those borrowers of small amounts who are not in a position to obtain ordinary bank credit." The maximum rates which the company charges its borrowers do not exceed 42 percent per annum —a generous rate which would make the money-changers in the temple turn pale.

The prospectus blushingly admits that its business is "an important contribution to the social and economic life of the country." It even states that a similar service to that rendered by it is "provided by other types of organizations, usually at lower rates, to the same class of borrowers."

And who are the borrowers? According to the pros-

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pectus 61.19 percent of them are skilled and unskilled workers; office and clerical workers comprise 8.97 percent; and federal, state, county and city employees comprise 8.08 percent; thus 78 percent of this corporation's business was done with the low-wage, low-salary class at a modest charge which did not apparently exceed 42 percent per year.

In addition to the generous treatment it gives to borrowers in the matter of interest, the corporation does not force the borrower to yield up his worldly possessions unless he fails to meet his payments. They "resort to legal enforcement only in cases where the borrower is able but unwilling to pay." But just in case, "the borrowers usually furnish chattel mortgages on household goods." The average amount borrowed by the customer in the current year is $145 to be paid over a period of eighteen months (with 52 percent interest). However, the corporation's experience "indicates that the average borrower obtains a new loan twice before paying off his indebtedness."

Make no mistake, this is a respectable business. The issue of stock was registered with the Securities and Exchange Commission. The corporation conforms to the laws of the various states in which it operates. Its directory includes none but Aryan American names. As an investment it ranks with the best. The earnings reported for 1937 were at the annual rate of nearly 17 percent of the corporation's net worth after all allowances for taxes, bad debts, and other expenses.

Why not get aboard—and be forever damned as a worse usurer than Shylock ever was?

H. R. EVANS.

THE JEWS AND TWO REVOLUTIONS

New York, N. Y.

TO the Editor: Being a member, organizer and employed official of the German Center party and a student of its history, program, resolutions and activity, it gives me great pain when I read somewhere the term "Catholic Center party," because this is not correct ("The Jews and Two Revolutions," in December 30 issue of THE COMMONWEAL). Bismarck and an antagonistic press used this term to fight against the Center party and the Catholic Church. In the United States it was used against the candidacy of Catholics for public offices, especially Alfred E. Smith. If Catholic publications are using this term then it is an insult to the founders and responsible leaders though they are deceased and the party is dissolved. What are the facts?

The foundation of the Center faction in the Reichstag and in the Prussian Diet dates back to 1870 and 1871 respectively, and hence in these years began the building up of the party. The venerated leader of this party, Ludwig Windthorst, who was before the annexation of the kingdom of Hanover twice Minister of Justice in that country, was elected a member of the Reichstag as well as of the Diet. In the session of the Reichstag on April 23, 1874, Windthorst recalled the circumstances which led to the foundation of the party and then said: "That is the beginning and the cause of the forming of the Center faction. After long consideration and discussion it has been agreed, with full consciousness, that it is not necessary to belong to any faith to be a member of it." There was also a formal resolution to that effect.

The fact that the overwhelming majority of its voters and enrolled members were Catholics does not make it a Catholic party. The fact remains that in the 70's several members of both factions belonged to Protestant faiths, and orthodox Protestants and Jews were not only voters but also enrolled members. This I can affirm from my own official experience.

There was no question about his faith, if anyone wanted to become a member. The whole procedure was informal and there was no oath.

George N. Shuster, who has used the erroneous term, is also mistaken when he speaks about the struggle of the "Catholic Center party" in the 1840's. There was no such thing in the 1840's. The "Catholic faction" in the Prussian Diet was formed in 1852, and in 1858 changed its name to "Center faction." It existed till 1867.

It is not the first time that this grave error has occurred in a Catholic publication. But it should be corrected. Otherwise the venerated and admired leaders of this party, which single-handed fought the battle for freedom of religious teaching and life in Germany and constantly stated and proved that the party was not a "Confessional" or "Catholic" party, but a "political party," would deserve the name of hypocrites. God forbid!

GOTTFRIED KLEUBER.

CATHOLIC TRUTH FOR SUFFERING CHINA

Hongkong, China.

TO the Editor: We take the liberty of approaching you in order to ask for your kind assistance in our present condition.

You have certainly followed the development of the war in China and its connections with the Catholic Church. Although hundreds of churches have been destroyed and flourishing communities have been dispersed, yet the war has given an opportunity to the Church to show its charity, and this has brought a considerable movement of mass conversions. In many provinces of China, missionaries are so pressed with the demands of the new converts that they hardly have an adequate number of catechists to instruct them. It is therefore necessary for them to use books and leaflets to convey the knowledge of the elementary principles of Christian doctrine to the new Catholics. But owing to the urgent demands of relief for the suffering victims of the war and the work of reconstruction of the churches, many missionaries cannot afford to buy Catholic literature, which, under the present circumstances, would be a powerful means of Catholic propaganda.

It is the ambition and the desire of our C. T. S. to send to these good missionaries books and pamphlets which might help them in their work, but we are unable to undertake this important work owing to lacks of funds. And we think that in view of the major needs of the suffering victims, we can hardly appeal to the general public which would not realize, under the present circumstances, the importance and the value of such an apostolate.

However we feel sure that you, being interested in the work of the Catholic press as much as we are, will fully

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understand and appreciate the importance of this work, and we hope that you will extend your generous help to suffering China which needs the enlightenment of the Catholic truth as much as it needs food and help for its suffering population.

The C. T. S. of Hongkong will undertake therefore, with your support, to supply this need. To the full extent of every donation received, Chinese Catholic literature, acquired at cost price, will be distributed free of all charge to missionaries in China. As this literature is produced at a cost that is small according to foreign standards, even the smallest donation will help and will be gladly received.

Rev. N. Maestrini, *Secretary,*
Catholic Truth Society of Hongkong.

WAR AND YOU AND I

St. Albans, England.

TO the Editors: It would seem that Father Gerald Vann's excellent articles relieve me of the necessity of replying in detail to Father Edgar Smothers's kind letter in your issue of December 10. May I therefore simply say two things?

(1) Father Smothers's points all depend on certain disputable assumptions, particularly the assumption that it is possible in these days to have efficacious military action without using or cooperating with immoral methods.

(2) Catholic war-resisters are such because they are convinced that that attitude is "four-square with the common teaching of the Church." We are not less concerned to maintain "our Catholic solidarities" than are those who disagree with us; and we agree in this, that the test of the Catholicity of this or that "solidarity" is its agreement with the charity of Christ.

Donald Attwater.

WHO SAID "EHEU FUGACES"?

New York, N. Y.

TO the Editors: Your stimulating contributor, Mr. Henry Tetlow, makes a point in your issue of January 6, when he dispels much of the glow surrounding the nostalgia for the old country store which has succumbed to modern competition. Mr. Tetlow makes something of a case for mail order houses but curiously neglects the related question of chain food stores, not to mention the open markets, which seem to be their latest form. Granted that a local storekeeper supplied by the old-time jobber cannot supply provender of the same quality as cheaply as the chain store, there are other ways of securing comparable savings. Experience has demonstrated in a number of localities that by pooling their purchases and their storage facilities independent storekeepers can more than hold their own with the local cogs in those highly centralized merchandising organizations which look upon each community solely as a sector from which to draw out a certain number of dollars per annum. And is Mr. Tetlow insensible to the ancient amenities of the old cracker barrel and does he really prefer to do his shopping without the personal touch? Does not his love for independence and the land extend wherever feasible to human relationships?

John B. Sage.

Points & Lines

How's Business in '39?

THE CUSTOMARY publicized year-end predictions of the nation's business leaders were almost without exception of a moderately optimistic tone. Typical was the temper of an N.B.C. symposium of executives from the auto, steel, railroad, movie, food, textile, newspaper, drug and banking industries. Among the most hopeful was the grocery representative who announced that a recent survey had indicated that two out of three grocery manufacturers are planning to add salesmen, one out of two to add factory workers and one out of three office workers. Representatives of other industries were optimistic; some voiced the proviso that the government would cooperate through economies and non-interference. Among the most sanguine of the New Year statements was issued by Secretary of Labor Frances Perkins who pins her faith on housing as the greatest spur to recovery. She says:

> On the basis of past experience the housing industry should afford employment at the site of construction to more than 800,000 workers during the coming year. In addition the building of these homes will require the production of more than 5,000,000,000 board feet of lumber, of almost 7,000,000,000 bricks, 25,000,000 barrels of cement, 2,000,000 tons of steel and 20 000,000 gallons of paint. The manufacture and transportation of these and other materials used in housing construction should provide employment to an additional 1,250,000 workers.

Newsweek lists several reasons for the optimism observable among the nation's currently quoted business leaders:

> (1) the huge construction carry-over (work will not start on a major proportion of the near-record building contracts let since September until mild weather prevails); (2) prospects for further construction gains (Johns-Manville officials predict that 400,000 new home units, the biggest volume since 1929, will be started . . .); (3) probable improved consumer spending, for the lag of employment and pay rolls in the early stages of a recovery usually is made up in the latter phases; (4) a more conservative Congress—result of the November elections.

It must be kept in mind that the persistence of unemployment, the falling off in commodity prices, the curtailing of our foreign trade by the territorial and diplomatic gains of the totalitarian states, and the continuing threat of another world war are strong adverse factors. In fact the seasonable optimism of the moment might well be tempered by a more historic and long-range view of the present state of the national economy. As *Business Week* declares editorially:

> In three years we have had a major boom and a major depression; now we're back where we started. . . . In ten years we have swung through three major cycles. And the net of a decade is a weakened industrial structure, a chastened spirit of enterprise, an economic suspense that extends from the executive clinging precariously to his desk to the mechanic clinging precariously to his lathe. . . . It seems ironical to speak of the American standard of living or boast of American efficiency against the background of this record. No statistician can figure the average of the highest rate of wages in the world and the largest number

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of unemployed in the world; or devise an index of efficiency for factories that work at half capacity half the time.

Some of the reasons for this instability are ventured by Dr. Paul H. Nystrom, professor of marketing at Columbia University, who in a speech reported in the *Times* observes the following concerning the past ten years:

> Our export markets began to dwindle after the World War. They were, however, kept up artificially for some years by the device of making loans to other countries, loans which have turned out to be uncontrollable. Most of the former export markets are now gone and what is left of them seems destined to decline still further. The change from horse to automotive power on American farms and roads reduced farm acreage requirements formerly used in the production of animal feed by millions of acres, acreage not immediately needed in growing other products. Our own domestic markets for all classes of consumer goods have also begun a fundamental tendency to slow up because of the declining rate of increase of population.

A confirmed pessimist these days is the thoughtful John T. Flynn who writes in the *New Republic:*

> The recovery of business since February has been swift. To understand that you need but keep these facts in mind—that from January, 1937, to February, 1938, business went downward twice as fast as it had risen from 1934 to Christmas, 1936. And that from February, 1938, to November, 1938, it rose again twice as fast as it went down. . . . But there is no sign on the horizon to justify the belief that this latest recovery will continue very long. There are many signs to warrant the belief that it will not. Only the government's expenditures have brought it along thus far. . . . There are no signs of life in the great capital-goods industries. If any force produces recovery in the coming year it will be some fortuitous circumstance not now in sight.

"Hemisphere Solidarity"

PUBLIC interest in the Pan-American Congress, with the publicity that went with it, was centered around the opening of the Lima meeting, and at its close there was surprisingly little comment in the daily and periodical press. This is unfortunate, because nearly all students of inter-American affairs agree that much more important than occasional declarations and fresh resolves are a consistent interest, policy and action on our part toward Latin America. And everyone agrees that the worth of the declarations signed at Lima will be tested by the manner they are implemented in the nations which signed them. Thus, on December 28, the Baltimore *Sun* said in an editorial:

> Yesterday the Inter-American Conference which opened at Lima on December 9 concluded its work when the representatives of twenty-one American nations formally signed the 130 resolutions, declarations and acts which are the work of the meeting. The worth and nature of these agreements will become clear only after they have been tested by time. . . . However, the conference has accomplished a great deal within the limits that were natural to it. For there is no doubt that the correspondents are right in pointing out that Lima virtually adopted the whole of the eight-point program which Secretary of State Cordell Hull enunciated in its entirety so long ago as the summer of 1937. . . . The Lima meeting has repudiated the use of force as an instrument of national policy. It has pledged the participating countries to respect the "precepts of international law" and the sanctity of treaties and engagements. It has emphasized anew the importance of economic reconstruction as a foundation of peace. And it has declared for international cooperation.

In the New York *Times,* Arthur Krock points out that Secretary Hull is one of those people who do not work in fits and starts, but keeps plugging at his main purpose:

> Of all his accomplishments in the State Department, the Reciprocal Trade Agreements Act is the base. It represents his fundamental economics, his way to solution of all the world's problems. . . . According to his own program he had a success at Lima. Those declarations and commitments he did not get this time he will try for again. Always he has come away from these difficult Pan-American conferences with a little more than he had before.

The eight-point Declaration of Lima itself, which, along with over 100 other projects or resolutions of one sort or another, were signed by the conference, was generally looked upon as a demonstration of the Good Neighbor policy and as a new formulation, on a less unilateral basis, of the Monroe Doctrine. *Time* says:

> The Declaration of Lima, a sort of interlocking Monroe Doctrine for all American nations, declares that the American states "reaffirm their continental solidarity and their purpose to collaborate in the maintenance of the principles upon which solidarity is based"; that they "reaffirm their decision to maintain and defend them against all foreign intervention"; that whenever a crisis arises any American country can call for a meeting of all the other signers.

Dorothy Thompson, in her syndicated column, took a hopeful view of this:

> At Lima the American republics have formulated a common foreign policy, which if it is properly implemented will constitute the clearest counter-program which has yet been framed to the policies of the two totalitarian internationals: the Comintern and the Fascintern. . . . I consider this first point of the most critical importance, for it is perhaps the first official recognition of the use of the revolutionary weapon as an instrument of conquest. . . . Indeed, the eight points of the Pan-American foreign policy, as between themselves and as between Pan America and the rest of the world, have created a concert of international order which is very close to the ideas of the League of Nations. . . . Its weakness, of course, is that it is not implemented, but if we should implement it only for ourselves we should in all probability chart a new course in international affairs.

Business Week reflected the more general disillusion:

> It is because of the unsettled outlook in Europe that most Americans view the outcome of the Lima conference so pessimistically. Nothing was accomplished which will produce startling results in the near future. . . . Whatever the opposition of such leaders as the Argentine to a revival of an active Monroe Doctrine policy, events in Europe next spring are likely to play into the hands of President Roosevelt in his plan for building up a bigger navy and a huge air force. . . . And despite the losses to this country on loans made in the 1920's, a new lending program will be pushed by Washington next spring.

Regarding the "League," the *Christian Century* believes:

> The truth seems to be that the conference was determined not to adopt any declaration which could later be interpreted as forming even a semi-organized league of American states under the leadership of the United States.

The *Christian Science Monitor* said:

> Greatest gain may ultimately prove to lie in the working demonstration supplied by the United States of its Good Neighbor policy.

Mr. Nicholas Roosevelt, writing for the New York *Herald Tribune,* explained how he thinks there is more

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need of Latin America demonstrating this policy than for us:

> Not that the Latin-American nations are deliberately unneighborly, either toward one another, or toward us. But their outlook is, almost without exception, cynically realistic. . . . Many of the Latin-American countries, while not openly anti-foreign, have looked on foreign interests—especially foreign business interests—as fair game for their politicians. . . . But it seems foolish to pretend that the existence of this very large burden of defaulted debt [85 percent of 3.5 billion dollars] is not a handicap in the development of better relations between our own people and those south of the Rio Grande.

The Far East

EVENTS in China and Japan have interest from two quite distinct points of view, which are, of course, inter-related: the point of view which chiefly concerns itself with the final results of the conflict and that which is primarily interested in the effect of the conflict upon American interests. Rodney Gilbert writing in *Foreign Affairs* sums up an attitude toward the future which seems general among writers on the subject:

> Since the capture of Hankow the Japanese military have been busy with the task of clearing the Canton-Hankow and the Peiping-Hankow railroads of Chinese forces. They are finding this no easy matter. In the menatime light naval craft have advanced another hundred miles or so up the Yangtze and the Japanese air force has been busier than usual bombing remote centers of population. An expedition into northwest China, where the former Red armies still hold Shensi province and where Kansu serves as a distributing depot for such supplies as come from Russia by truck, has been announced but has not yet been organized as I write. Guerrillas still operate along almost every mile of Japanese communications in China and the population of vast blocks of territory between these lines has not yet seen a Japanese uniform.
>
> So the war is not over, although it is not likely to be punctuated again by such great protracted positional struggles as the Japanese campaign against Shanghai, Suchow and Hankow. Japan has not won; and whether she does eventually win now depends little upon the driving power of her military machine, but rather upon the survival of the fighting spirit among the Chinese people on the one hand, and upon the economic staying power of the Japanese nation on the other. The Chinese people have only to remain "non-cooperative"—at which they are masters—and to keep a few millions of their armed men engaged in active sabotage, thereby tying up at least half a million Japanese soldiery. If they can do this, they can impose an economic strain on Japan which in a few years will lower her vitality to the breaking point: a resurgence of active rebellion might then result in as complete an evacuation of China as that of the Mongols at the end of their conquering career.

A. Morgan Young in the *Nineteenth Century* expresses a similar view and makes an interesting point:

> If you take the map and draw a line from Peiping down through Hankow to Canton, east of that line is much less than half of China. West of it there are some deserts and many mountains, but there are also vast cultivated areas and an enormous population. Japan has proclaimed her intention to go on and conquer the whole—unless it submits without conquest. There are few places where the Japanese dare go more than ten miles from the railway. Even a great navigable river like the Yangtze gives them little comfort. They cling to the rails. It will be slow business to conquer China by constructing railways. The chief danger is that Japan must go on, whatever the cost to herself and to China. If some great power or combination of powers stopped her, the relief would be even greater to Japan than to China, but short of that she is committed to unlimited conquest with limited means. It is vain for western investors cynically to wait for the pickings. At present they are merely watching their losses and are likely to watch them out of sight.

Maclean Patterson in the Baltimore *Sun* finds that the Japanese deserve credit for their accomplishments to date:

> Foreign military observers are said to be amazed at Japan's accomplishments and China's ineptitude during the conflict. Japan now occupies more than 600,000 square miles of territory south of the Great Wall.
>
> In this area there are said to be more than 1,250,000 guerrillas as against Japan's 800,000 troops. Despite this the Japanese are running railways, river, lake and canal steamers, developing trade and reopening mines.
>
> Why the Chinese, with all their armed guerrillas and Chiang Kai-shek's army of 1,500,000, do not counter-attack remains a mystery.

Perhaps the mystery is not so great if it is remembered that throughout the war the Chinese have had at their disposal neither effective artillery nor an adequate air force.

In *Asia* Stuart Lillico, for some years on the staff of the *Japan Advertiser,* describes censorship in Japan:

> Although JOAK, the central broadcasting station for all Japan, features a regular short-wave program daily for listeners in North and South America, southern Europe and southeastern Asia, all in the proper tongues, it is a criminal offense in Nippon to be found in posession of a radio set capable of receiving similar good-will broadcasts from the rest of the world. . . . Police hunt down and confiscate short-wave receiving sets just as diligently as they do firearms. . . . Foreign residents are not exempt. Recently half a dozen Britons and Americans have become involved with the Yokohama police.

He goes on to describe the operations of the Japanese press:

> Apparently the Japanese *shimbun* is actually considerably less fettered than the German *blat* or the Italian *giornale.* In comparison with the Soviet press, it borders on anarchy. Beside the more subtle British methods, Japan's bars and phobias seem strangling. In short, Nippon dangles in censorship where it does in many other matters—between the fascist heaven and the democratic earth. William Henry Chamberlin recently summed the situation up very aptly when he remarked that "there is just enough freedom of the press left in Japan to permit an occasional editor to say there is none."

It has repeatedly been charged that Japan is conducting a mass trade in heroin "as an instrument of policy to promote the degradation of the Chinese." In reply to a question in the House of Commons on this subject, the following answer was given (*Manchester Guardian*):

> From the information in the possession of the Foreign Secretary there was no evidence that the increase of the drug traffic in China was the outcome of any deliberate plan on the part of the Japanese government or that it was aimed at the systematic demoralization of the Chinese people. In North China before the Japanese occupation in 1937 an attempt was made by the central Chinese government to enforce drastic opium and narcotic laws which had been promulgated in 1935. There were indications that they were to some extent successful.
>
> Since the Japanese occupation these deterrents had to a large extent disappeared. In February, 1938, the Chinese government's ordinances were formally repealed by the Peking Provisional government, and in May it was announced that the Peking Consolidated Tax Administration

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had decided to allow the reopening of 300 opium dens. On the other hand, certain ordinances had been issued by the Provisional government, but there was not time yet to know what the effect of them would be. In Peking there were establishments where drugs might be bought and openly indulged in.

Such a denial is tantamount to admitting the accusation.

One of Japan's reasons for the invasion of China was to save the country from communism; it is now pointed out that the effect has been to drive Chiang Kai-shek to seek Russian aid even more than before. A Chinese, Kimber H. K. Den, writes in the *Churchman* (Episcopalian monthly):

> Because, since the outbreak of the war, Japan has created a "reign of terror" in China by her merciless acts of plundering and murdering in all those areas where her army advances. These crimes of plain aggression and robbery of country is driving China into the very arms of the Soviets, exactly what Japan is claiming to prevent.

An editorial in *Asia* describes the situation in more detail:

> At the beginning of December it began to look as if, whatever else Japan may have accomplished in China, in one respect she might have achieved the exact opposite of what she set out to do. She seems to have driven China straight into the arms of the Communists. At any rate the "united front" between Kuomintang and Communists has been strikingly reaffirmed. The Chinese Communist Executive, meeting at Yenan, voted to permit Communists to join nationalist organizations. The government in its turn was reported to have adopted a pro-Soviet policy such as had long been striven for by Sun Fo, the son of the founder of the Chinese Republic, and Madame Sun Yat-sen, who has fought steadily for that cooperation with Russia for which her husband stood. Nevertheless Chiang Kai-shek still felt free to assure the British Ambassador in a "showdown talk" that, if Britain did not choose to protect her South China interests by giving him aid, he "might" turn elsewhere.

A similar threat is said to have produced the $25,000,000 American credit to China from the Export-Import Bank. But Walter Lippmann has a different explanation, which bolsters up his argument for a defensive league of all the American nations coupled with rearmament:

> According to a circumstantial report of the Associated Press, General Chiang Kai-shek conferred with the British Ambassador in November and with the American Ambassador about two weeks ago. He is said to have told them that unless Great Britain furnished tangible help to the Chinese resistance, he would make terms with Japan through the mediation of Germany. . . . The problem posed for us by the Chinese is this: Does it matter to the United States now, and will it matter three or five years hence, whether China resists Japan or becomes the ally of Japan? If we think it will not matter to us how strong Japan becomes, then we should do nothing. But if we think it does matter, then we have to decide now whether to help the Chinese or go to Tokyo, as Mr. Chamberlain went to Munich, in the hope that we can appease Japan by letting the Chinese be conquered.

The prospect of either alternative, a bolshevised or a Japonified China, is, to put it mildly, distressing. Less spectacular interpreters of events merely note the strong line we are taking with Japan's closing of the open door and approve it, as does the St. Louis *Post-Dispatch:*

> The United States government faces up to Japan in a blunt note reserving American rights in China. . . . In self-respect, in good morals, in expediency—knowing as it does that any palliation of aggression in the world today leads only to more aggression—the Government of the United States could have taken no other stand.

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The Stage & Screen

Everywhere I Roam

HAD THE rest of the play equaled the first act Arnold Sundgaard and Marc Connelly's pageant of the growth of the West might have proved another "Cavalcade." The authors of "Everywhere I Roam" are evidently disciples of Rousseau, and their belief in the superiority of the bucolic life to one infected with industrialism imparts eloquence of language and beauty of thought to the unspoiled pioneer of Act I. But when finance in the person of two serpents, labeled Jay and Jim, enters this demi-Paradise things begin to deteriorate not only spiritually but artistically. But because of the first act, and especially its beautiful symbolic dance in honor of the harvest, and also because of Mr. Connelly's superb direction, and the admirable acting of a large cast with special bows to lovely Katherine Emery, Norman Lloyd, Dean Jagger, Robert Porterfield and Paul Huber, the play should not be missed. (At the National Theatre.)

The Merchant of Yonkers

THORNTON WILDER'S latest play, unlike "Our Town," has scenery, though it is scenery designed by Boris Aronson with his tongue in his cheek. In fact, the whole play is written with Mr. Wilder's tongue very much in his cheek. It is founded on an old German farce and paints the adventures of a penurious merchant out to get a wife. In its direction Max Reinhardt has his fling with trap doors, the hiding of people under tables and in dressers and all the other necessities of continental mid-nineteenth-century farce. But to all except the ultra-sophisticated it makes a pleasing and at times even a merry evening in the theatre, especially when the characters come down to the footlights and address the audience confidentially about their desires and things appertaining to them. These asides show Mr. Wilder at his best. The rest of the play must be taken as a lark. It is beautifully played by Jane Cowl as the match-making Mrs. Levi, who despite her name is Irish, by June Walker as the flirtatious milliner, by Percy Waram as the merchant, and by Tom Ewell and John Call as the apprentices. (At the Guild Theatre.)

Bright Rebel

STANLEY YOUNG'S play on Lord Byron has many admirable qualities. It is smoothly, at times eloquently, written, it has several very effective scenes, and it is informed with a passionate sincerity. The trouble is that Mr. Young has tried to cover too much ground, to give a running comment on Byron's life instead of sticking to a single major episode. In a novel this might be possible, but not in a play. The result is that "Bright Rebel" lacks both cumulative and focal interest. But it is a play by a man who, when he has mastered his dramatic technique, ought to do fine things. Let us hope too that his next play will receive more skilful direction than is given this one, and a more evenly balanced cast. John Cromwell is a young actor of promise, though he has not the weight nor technical equipment as yet to carry the burden of a play, but excellent performances are given by Beatrice Terry, Charles Atkins, Francesca Bruning, Ann Loring, Jeanne Caselle and Mary McCormack. (At the Lyceum Theatre.)

GRENVILLE VERNON.

"Here We Go 'Round the Mulberry Bush"

MOVIES have a way of repeating themselves; and "Kentucky" is a repeat of all films that use for locale that state famous for its blue grass, feuds, traditions, horses and impecunious landed gentry. The Goodwins don't speak to the Dillons because Marse Dillon shot Marse Goodwin in '61 when Kentucky was trying to decide whether it was a Northern or Southern State. But in 1937, when Jack Dillon (Richard Greene) falls for Sally Goodwin (Loretta Young), love triumphs over all obstacles. The handsome boy and beautiful girl are finally united after a lot of horse-talk, the death of Peter Goodwin (Walter Brennan), who is the last of the old school, and the winning of the Derby at Churchill Downs by Sally's horse in a really exciting race. The only unusual note in this picture is the good Technicolor work. (Music by Stephen Foster.)

You know before you see it what "The Duke of West Point" will be about—many shots of West Point, "the place gets in your blood," Steve the hero being too fresh, plebes being hazed, plebes sucking in their guts, much drilling, Steve sneaking out of quarters at night, Steve being "silenced" for breaking the honor code, Steve being the star athlete, football and hockey games being won in the last minute of play, the sweet young girl who is the coach's daughter, Flirtation Walk, Steve being acclaimed by the entire corps. The only difference between this picture, which was directed by Alfred T. Green, and all other military school pictures is that this one is the best. Louis Hayward, as the lad from Cambridge University, speaks a brand of English that would and does make two thousand typical American boys take notice. He and Richard Carlson and Tom Brown act as if they really might be young men at West Point and not Hollywood starlets having a romp through college. And another thing: the hockey game, although they win it, is the most exciting hockey game that's been in the films so far.

"Artists and Models Abroad," in spite of its collection of best names that worked on the picture, is no better than most Models, Gold Diggers, Melodies, Broadcasts, etc. Against a well-photographed background of Paris and its late exposition, Joan Bennett, blond this time and the fourth richest girl in America, joins Jack Benny and his stranded troupe who are trying to get back to America because Paris has no Federal Theatre Project. She learns how to climb out of windows and over roof tops and how to model, with the other girls, gowns of leading Paris designers. It's all a bit of froth decorated with Jack Benny's being funny, but not as funny as he might be if he had some new material, Mary Boland's being as exasperated and gauche as usual, and the Yacht Club Boys' singing a gay number about being "broke, ya dope."

PHILIP T. HARTUNG.

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Books of the Day

The Changing Point of View

Background to Modern Science, edited by Joseph Needham and Walter Pagel. New York: The Macmillan Company. $2.00.

THIS is the story of the changing point of view of science and is mostly concerned with the advances of the past forty years. The book is divided into ten chapters comprising the subject-matter of lectures given at Cambridge University in 1936, under the auspices of the History of Science Committee, by the men who played a leading part in bringing about the changes they record. The separate chapters differ considerably in style, the number of technical terms employed, and the scientific knowledge which they demand of the reader. History is the thread that knits the parts together and, though there is change in the thesis of each action, it is change which emphasizes continuity of effort and the importance of many now discarded theories.

Chapter I, "Greek Natural Philosophy and Modern Science," by F. M. Cornford, reviews the difference between the point of view of modern science and that of ancient Greeks. It shows that the Greeks were not untrained children who sought occasional glimpses of elusive truths. Theirs was a mature civilization, but their approach to nature was different from ours and the questions they asked were different questions. This is a good chapter, full of suggestive ideas, but it lacks the completeness it might have had because it neglects too many important forms of what the author calls "cosmologic myths."

Chapter II, "From Aristotle to Galileo," by Sir William Dampier, traces the effects of Greek science and the gradual dawning of the idea that new knowledge could be gained by observation and experiment at the time of Galileo. It shows the fundamental nature of his work and calls attention to the purely conceptual character of experimental science. It suffers from such statements as the following: "To Thomas Aquinas, creation is a procession of all creatures from God. . . ." This, if it means anything, implies development, or emanation, and is the antithesis of the Catholic concept of creation. Galileo is said to have introduced the problem of knowledge which he did not do at all. He changed it somewhat in form but the question concerning how man's non-material mind can grasp material things presented itself to Aristotle and was exhaustively treated by Saint Thomas Aquinas.

"Forty Years of Physics," by the late Lord Rutherford, is in two parts. The first starts with the discovery of X-rays, which discovery gave birth to modern physics, and outlines the growth of knowledge of radioactivity. The second deals with the present-day theory of atomic structure. Both are clearly and simply stated. "Forty Years of Crystal Physics," by W. L. Bragg, indicates the manner in which the outlooks of chemistry, biochemistry, metallurgy and mineralogy have been modified by X-ray analysis of crystal structures. "Forty Years of Atomic Theory," by F. W. Aston, takes the reader inside the atom and explains the discovery and the importance of isotopes. It ends with the assertion that the future "nuclear chemist" will know how to synthesize elements and that subatomic energy will be released in some of the reactions involved.

"Forty Years of Astronomy," by Sir Arthur Eddington,

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But on the whole we agree most thoroughly with John Cournos who writes "no review can do justice to this sort of thing." Neither can an advertisement. You have to get the book itself before you can find out what all the excitement is about.

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"Forty Years of Physiology and Pathology," by John A. Ryle, traces the advances in our understanding of the functions and operation of the stomach and shows the importance of cooperation between the practising physician and the experimental scientist. "Forty Years of Parasitology and Tropical Medicine," by the late G. H. F. Nuttall, traces the conquest of malaria and yellow fever and indicates the trend of modern research on yellow fever and tropical medicine in general.

"Forty Years of Evolution Theory," by R. C. Plunnett, emphasizes the soundness of the evolutionary viewpoint, the vicissitudes of Darwin's theory of natural selection, the growth of the science of genetics as the direct outcome of Mendelism, and the changing ideas concerning the meaning of species. It states rightly, that natural selection, though obviously existing, merely acts on heritable variations already developed; that the manner of origin of species is an unsolved problem though they are once more regarded as sharply demarcated and probably originate through some type of mutation. The obvious weakness of the chapter appears on pages 192 and 193 where brief mention of the views of Saint Augustine and Saint Thomas Aquinas reveals ignorance of what these men really taught. "Forty Years of Genetics," by J. B. S. Haldane, emphasizes the great importance of the subject in connection with the modern problem of evolution and the origin of species.

The book is instructive, extremely well written, and as up-to-date as a book on science can be.

WILLIAM M. AGAR.

FICTION

Derelicts, by William McFee. New York: Doubleday, Doran and Company. $2.50.

WILLIAM McFEE'S new book is enough to make most contemporary novelists ashamed of themselves. It contains enough substance for just about fifteen of the novels of Robert Nathan, Clyde Brion Davis or John Steinbeck; or about twenty of the proletarian variety. It is so jam-packed with incident, comment and character that in less skilled hands the job would have been botched. And it is told in one of the finest of prose styles. Not only is almost every sentence flawless but McFee can say more in two sentences than most of his contemporaries can in whole chapters: "It struck him as a paradox that he should sympathize with the peculiar prejudices of a caste while preserving his own proletarian illusions. It was even more of a paradox that he should admire them without ever envying their destiny."

To McFee, virtually all men (and most women) are fools. They differ in degree more than in kind. Even the ironic Mr. Spenlove, the chief engineer who tells the main story, has come close at times to being a fool, although he is McFee's favorite and speaks for McFee at all times. The thing then, is that despite being a fool, if a man have integrity he shall prevail. This is rather startling, coming from a contemporary, when John Dos Passos, for one, both in his books and in his conversation, has laughed at the word "integrity." If the rich are thoroughly riddled by Mr. Spenlove's comment, the proletariat, especially the professional variety, do not escape. And McFee's quarrel with them, modern youth, is "their rather brazen assumption that an honorable integrity was of no significance in human life." Of course, modern youth is here simply aping one of its few respected elders, for it was Lenin who wrote: "The lie is our best weapon."

McFee's main story concerns the Englishman, Cecil Remson, whom circumstances broke and made and finally helped find a great happiness. But it is Remson's peculiar integrity which enabled him to take advantage of those circumstances.

McFee knows the tropics as he knows the sea. Only H. M. Tomlinson has written about them so well. "Derelicts" is the best book I have read since "Diary of a Country Priest," which it resembles only in its literary excellence. Most publishers would have stretched this closely-packed work into a three-dollar volume.

HARRY SYLVESTER.

PHILOSOPHY

Reason and Revelation in the Middle Ages, by Etienne Gilson. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. $1.50.

THE THREE chapters of this book were delivered as the Richards Lectures for 1937, at the University of Virginia. As the title suggests, they deal with the interplay of rationalism and fideism in medieval thought, and with the harmonious adjustment of faith and knowledge in the philosophy of Saint Thomas. The historical sequence is conceived as a consequence of necessities intrinsic to the philosophical problem, on the general theory "that in spite of its slow and fluctuating evolution the history of ideas is determined from within by the internal necessity of ideas themselves . . ." (page 95).

Professor Gilson distinguishes three attitudes in medieval thought on the problem of reason and faith. One asserts the primacy of faith in all speculative thought, and the radical insufficiency of reason except as supported by revelation. This viewpoint is illustrated, in its varying degrees of intensity, in Tertullian, Saint Augustine, Saint Anselm and the Augustinian tradition of the thirteenth century. The purely rationalist attitude is exemplified by the Arab philosopher, Ibn Roschd (Averroes), who regarded religious belief as an imaginative substitute, suited to the needs of the uneducated, for the demonstrable truths of a purely rational metaphysics. Saint Thomas is exhibited as a critic of both extremes, who solved the problem by putting faith and reason in their proper places. The Thomist solution rests on the principle that what is knowable by rational demonstration cannot coincide, except *per accidens,* with revealed truths attainable by faith alone; hence there can be no genuine conflict between the two.

The collapse of medival metaphysics is ascribed to the radical separation of rational knowledge and religious belief, characteristic of the Nominalists of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. The author does not make clear, in function of his theory of the history of ideas as intrinsically determined by the ideas themselves, just why Nominalism followed on the heels of Thomism. Was nominalist "separatism" an inevitable consequent of thomist "noncoincidence"? Or is it possible that history, at this crucial point, ceased to illustrate Professor Gilson's theory?

ERNEST A. MOODY.

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POETRY

Mystical Poems of Nuptial Love, by Coventry Patmore; edited by Rev. Terence L. Connolly, S.J. Boston: Bruce Humphries. $3.00.

FATHER CONNOLLY now adds to a number of published studies this annotated edition of Patmore's "Unknown Eros." A few other poems, including the suppressed "1887" are included. Editing of this kind is always a difficult undertaking, and it becomes doubly perplexing when the author has a religious as well as a literary significance. I am afraid that Father Connolly has in a measure fallen between two stools. If his intention was—as the title appears to indicate—to prepare a work of spiritual reading, there would seem to be little occasion for the political odes. Nor would the reader expect to find more than a modicum of literary or textual information. If on the other hand the edition was designed to serve the literary student, it should have been either very simple in its exegesis (i.e., supply what the beginner needs by way of help), or as scholarly and definitive as possible.

Unfortunately the book attempts all these things and fails to accomplish any one of them well. For example, I can think of Patmore being used by earnest layfolk with the help of carefully organized meditation outlines. But the introduction and notes here given are too confusing and confused to provide that sort of guidance. There is much studiously collected information, but it is scattered about in truly unhousewifely fashion. I can also imagine a literary presentation. But this would surely have to do such things as determine the text of the poems. For example: what do Patmore's alterations of "Departure" in the 1878 edition mean? Again, the poems would have to be set clearly against the background of English verse, and very especially against their models, which were the odes of Saint John of the Cross. There are approaches to this kind of treatment in Father Connolly's book, but I am afraid they remain tentative and indecisive.

One wishes it were otherwise. For Patmore, despite the fact that his work bristles with difficulties, paradoxes and curious instances of personal bias, remains a great poet who has much to say to the present generation. His strength lies in his vision that only by fixing the spiritual boundaries of life can the rôle of man be determined. His weakness is that he set out to perform the task almost alone, attempting to do with sheer headstrong will what is perhaps to be achieved only by a great ontologically minded humility. It is necessary to take both things into consideration, and the result is that the "Angel in the House" is still the best of his works, though it needs illumination from the Odes. Father Connolly has gone so far in the right direction that I for one am sincerely hoping that he will take up the task anew and carry it to the end—or more nearly the end. GEORGE N. SHUSTER.

Poems, by LeBaron Cooke. Boston: Bruce Humphries. $2.00.

ONE OF the dwindling group of followers of the Imagists, Mr. Cooke has assembled (dedicated to Harriet Monroe, poet-editor, who encouraged his writing) what seems to be the culling from many years of contributing tailpieces to numerous magazines and newspapers. "Poems" contains more than 150 verses, yet, scathing as such a statement may seem, one must admit, honestly, that no more than a dozen or so seem of sufficient merit to warrant their collection formally in a book.

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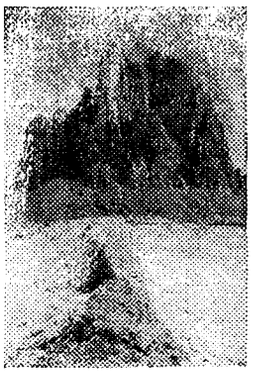

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philosophy of the East and its art, mildly pagan, his verse exemplifies the "'Bohemian" point of view. His scope is the simplest, his concepts remarkably unremoved from the ordinary: the relation of people to marionettes, of storm, and the effect of the elements, to human suffering; that a "poet's dream" (to which, in various poems, there is repeated reference, but no single presentation of anything remarkable of a true poet's experience) transforms reality. This last is perhaps the fundamental concept which has governed all his writing.

Mr. Cooke's forms are irregular, composed loosely after the pattern of the *tanka* and *hokku*, without following their classic restrictions: being such, they seem old-fashioned. Their development rarely requires more than seven, eight lines; often no more than three, four: of all, the most ambitious requires no more than sixteen lines for its development. The content is the slightest imaginable: one image is sufficient for a verse—often no more complex or extraordinary than the relation of stars in tree-branches to a lighted candelabra. His vocabulary is resourceless: "poet," "artist," "thrill," "glamor," "song," "moon," "grey," "House o' Dreams," "port of dreams," "autumn pain," and so on, appear in a surprising number of verses. Nevertheless, he does contrive, if infrequently, four or more lines with a certain common dignity, such as the rhymes traditional in Spain more frequently possess:

"A king once said to a poet;
'Sing of my achievements
And I will make you laureate.'
Whereupon the poet
Sang a song of destruction,
And forfeited his head;
The king, too, soon met the axman's blow,
Only the *song* lived."

However, what is most telling about the book is that it displays the extreme and apparently deliberate limitation of the mode of poetry carried on by the author.

RAYMOND E. F. LARSSON.

Minstrels of the Mine Patch, by George Korson. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press. $3.00.

"ONE saw mud, the other stars." . . . Those who write about coal miners almost invariably are so engrossed with the poverty of "The Patch" that they miss everything else. Here at last is a man who has seen the courage and heard the songs.

Korson was a newspaper reporter in 1924 when he began to wonder why there were no anthracite miners' songs like those of the lumbermen, the cowboys and the sailors. A search of libraries showed him that no collection existed. Korson did something about it. In 332 pages he has set down, complete with index, bibliography and glossary of technical and colloquial words, the results of years of collecting. It is a rich mine of American folklore that he has opened. There are chapters on "The Mine Patch," "Miners in Good Humor," "Boy Colliers," "Slavs as Miners," "Superstitions and Legends," "Injury and Death," "The Strike," "The Molly Maguires" and "A Miscellany."

Whether as history that but for Korson might have been lost forever with the coming of roads and radio, or whether as the grandest kind of reading, the book is invaluable. Its ballads, its poems, its sketches, its tall stories and its wise studies of mine problems (by the author) are alike unique. If this reviewer were to choose from all these riches, he would perhaps select the poem 'What Makes Us Strike," and from that the lines:

"'A miner?' Yes, sir, I work in the coal.
But some men treat you as though we had no soul,
You see those big bugs look down on the miner,
They're better—more educated—finer.
That's what they think; but I think th' other way,
And think myself as good, sir, any day
As any man that walks upon this earth,
No matter what his name or place of birth. . . .
A pretty independent lot we are likewise,
And will allow no boss to tyrannize,
We hate that like the devil hates the water
Blessed by the priest—and so we oughter. . . ."

Running through the collection is a robust—perhaps rude—but very real and Catholic faith. JOSEPH A. BREIG.

Kings and the Moon, by James Stephens. New York: The Macmillan Company. $1.60.

THESE new verses of James Stephens have much of the Gaelic flavor of his earlier songs. There is the same dreamy mysticism and the same sly humor, and there are the familiar touches of bitterness. Possibly some of the whimsy and impertinence of his former books are missing, and happily there is no reference to the Little People, though now and then may be found a bright feather that quite obviously fell from a green cap.

The rhymes are clipped and precise, and tend toward refrain; in most of the verses there are only two or three stressed syllables to a line. He has not sacrificed rhythm, however, and his wish for his song that he might "make it sing, And make it new" has been fulfilled.

Underneath the seeming levity of many of these poems, there is the characteristic grave utterance. He likes to give over the gay lyric to the service of philosophy. In "Bidding the Moon" he admonishes: "In black look to all light." He writes into his song the paradox:

"He who talks is dumb:
He is blind who sees:
Every touching hand is numb,
And truth is not of these:"

But the book in no way invites sadness. His rhymes have much of the freshness of a spring day which, in spite of its trickery and shadow, is a pleasant contrast to the lightning and thunder and impending doom which is the weather of much modern poetry. JESSICA POWERS.

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The Inner Forum

LA CITÉ CHRÉTIENNE, Belgian Catholic fortnightly, recently published the report of Father Vincent Lebbe, one of China's most celebrated missionaries, born a Belgian but long since a Chinese citizen, to Bishop Eugene Massi, Vicar Apostolic of Hankow. Father Lebbe is the founder of a Chinese order of lay Brothers, the little Brothers of St. John, which has supplied the Chinese army with a corps of stretcher-bearers, has operated a field hospital, and done many other works of mercy for the Chinese army. The most interesting part of Father Lebbe's report in many ways is that which deals with his relations with the Eighth Route Army.

"The existence of what was formerly the Red army, which now calls itself the 'eighth,' inspires many missionaries with fear or at least apprehension for the future. We have taken advantage of our special position and the wonderful opportunities it has given us to make contact with its chiefs and talk things over. The results have surpassed expectations. Their commander in chief even requested us to sing a solemn Mass for the victory of our troops, and at this Mass were present the entire staff and all the members of the 'political committee.' The Mass was followed by a tea party at which speeches were exchanged between the representatives of the Church (a Chinese Bishop was among those present) and the commanders of the 'eighth.' The invariable theme of these speeches was the joy all took in this meeting, in this first opportunity for mutual acquaintance, in the basis it afforded for believing that, whatever communism had meant in the past in China and continued to mean in Europe, there was now, in China, the possibility of mutual understanding. I know very well that pessimists will belittle such events; but optimists, of which I am one, will prefer to have confidence in the common sense and liberality of the Chinese people. . . . After all, they are not Russians. The commanding general a few days later extended an invitation to the Christian catechists to visit him, and solemnly presented them with two flags of honor, bearing, in addition to the four 'honorable' characters, the special citation: 'In grateful thanks to the Catholics of Manu for their solemn Mass and their prayers.'"

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